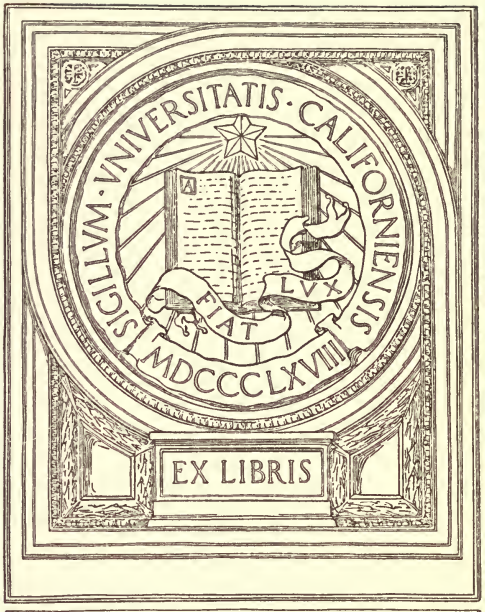
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THE LINWOODS;

OR,

SIXTY YEARS SINCE" IN AMERICA.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "HOPE LESLIE," "REDWOOD," &c.

The Eternal Power
Lodged in the will of man the hallowed names
Of freedom and of country.

MISS MITFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE LINWOODS.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Ignomy in ransom, and free pardon,
Are of two houses."

It is reasonable to suppose that the disclosures which occurred in Sir Henry Clinton's library would be immediately followed by their natural sequences: that love declared by one party, and betrayed by the other, would, according to the common usages of society, soon issue in mutual affiancing. But these were not the piping times of peace, and the harmony of events was sadly broken by the discords of the period.

The conflict of Mr. Linwood's political with his natural affections, at his eventful meeting with his son, was immediately followed by a frightful attack of gout in the stomach—a case to verify the theories of our eminent friend of the faculty, who locates the sensibility in the mucous tissue of that organ Isabella, afflicted on all sides, and expecting her father's death at every moment, never left his bedside. In vain Meredith besieged the house, and sent her message after message; not he, even, could draw her from her post. "My life depends on you,

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Belle," said her father: "the doctor says I must keep tranquil—he might as well say so to a ship in a squall—but my child, you are my polar star—my loadstone—my sheet-anchor—my every thing; don't quit me, Belle!" She did not, for an instant.

"Bless me! Mr. Meredith," said Helen Ruthven, on entering Mrs. Linwood's drawing-room, and finding Meredith walking up and down, with an expression of impatience and disappointment, "what is the matter—is Mr. Linwood worse?"

"Not that I know."

"How happens it that you are alone, then?"

"The family are with Mr. Linwood."

"The family! the old lady surely can take care of him; is Isabella invisible?—invisible to *you?*"

"I have not seen her since her father's illness."

"My heavens! is it possible! well, some people are better than others."

"I do not comprehend you, Miss Ruthven."

"My meaning is simple enough; a woman must be an icicle or an angel to hang over an old gouty father, without allowing herself a precious five minutes with her lover."

"Miss Linwood is very dutiful!" said Meredith, half sneeringly, for his vanity was touched.

"Dutiful!—she may be—she is undoubtedly—a very, very sweet creature is Isabella Linwood; but I should not have imagined her a person, if her heart were really engaged, to deny its longings and sit down patiently to play the dutiful daughter. I judge others by myself. In her situation—precise-

ly in hers," she paused and looked at Meredith with an expression fraught with meaning, "I should know neither scruple nor duty."

There was much in this artful speech of Helen Ruthven to feed Meredith's bitter fancies when he afterward pondered on it.—"If her heart were engaged!" he said, "it is—I am sure of it—and yet, if it were, she is not, as Helen Ruthven said, a creature to be chained down by duty. *If* it were! —it is—it shall be—her heart is the only one I have invariably desired—the only one I have found unattainable. I believe—I am almost sure, she loves me; but there is something lacking—I do not come up to her standard of ideal perfection!—others do not find me deficient. There's poor Bessie, a sylvan maiden she—but there's Helen Ruthven—the love, the just appreciation of such a woman, so full of genius, and sentiment, and knowledge of the world, would be—flattering."

These were after-thoughts of Meredith, for at the time his interview with Miss Ruthven was interrupted by Rose putting a note into his hand, addressed to Sir Henry Clinton, and requesting him, in Miss Linwood's name, to deliver it as soon as possible.

"Pray let me see that!" said Miss Ruthven; and after examining it closely on both sides, she returned it, saying, "Strange! I thought to have found somewhere, in pencil, some little expressive, world-full-of-meaning word; as I said, some people are very different from others!"

Meredith bit his lips and hastened away with the note. It contained a plain statement to Sir Henry Clinton of the motives of Herbert's return, and every fact attending it. The note was thus finished :—

"I have told you the unvarnished and unextenuated truth, my dear Sir Henry. I think that justice will dictate my brother's release, or, at least, require that he be treated as a prisoner of war; but if justice (justice perverted by artificial codes and traditionary abuses) cannot interpose in his behalf, I commend him to your mercy; think of him as if he were your own son, and then mete out to him, for the rashness of his filial affection, such measure as a father would allot to such offence.

"If my appeal is presuming, forgive me. My father is suffering indescribably, and we are all wretched. Send us, I beseech you, some kind word of relief."

Late in the afternoon, after many tedious hours, the following reply was brought to Isabella, written by Sir Henry's secretary :—

"Sir Henry Clinton directs me to present his best regards to Miss Linwood, and inform her that he regrets the impossibility of complying with her wishes,—that he has no absolute power by which he can remit, at pleasure, the offences of disloyal

subjects. Sir Henry bids me add, that he is seriously concerned at his friend Mr. Linwood's illness, and that he shall continue to send his servant daily to inquire about him."

"Yes, no doubt," said Isabella, in the bitterness of her disappointment, throwing down the note, "these empty courtesies will be strictly paid, while not a finger is raised to save us from utter misery!"

"My dearest child!" said her mother, who had picked up the note and reverently perused it, "how you are hurried away by your feelings! Sir Henry, or rather his secretary, which is the same thing, says as much as to say, that Sir Henry would aid us if he could; and I am sure I think it is extremely attentive of him to send every day to inquire after your poor father. I do wonder a little that Sir Henry did not sign his name; it would have seemed more polite, and Sir Henry is so strictly polite! I am afraid, my dear, you were not particular enough about your note. Was it written on gilt paper and sealed with wax? Isabella, do you hear me, child?"

"Indeed, mamma, I did not observe the paper, and I forget whether I sealed it at all. 'Remit at pleasure the offences of disloyal subjects!' Herbert has transferred his loyalty to his country, and is no longer amenable to his sovereign in another hemisphere."

"Feminine reasoning!" interposed Meredith, who entered at this moment. He stopped and gazed

at Isabella, and thought he had never seen her so perfectly lovely. Watching and anxiety had subdued her brilliancy, and had given a depth of tenderness, a softness to her expression, bordering on feminine weakness. When a man has a dread, however slight it may be, that a woman is superior to him, her attractions are enhanced by whatever indicates the gentleness and dependance of her sex.

Meredith took her hand: his eyes expressed the emotion she produced, and his lips all the sympathy and none of the vexation he had felt for the last few days; and then reverting to Sir Henry, he said, "I trust the current of your feelings will change when I tell you that I have obtained an order for Herbert's release."

"God bless you, Jasper!—Oh, mamma, do you hear?"

"Pray go, my dear madam," added Meredith, "and prepare Mr. Linwood for good news. You interrupted me, Isabella," he resumed, when Mrs. Linwood had left the room; "your wishes always fly over the means to the end—a moment's reflection will show you that your brother's release cannot be unconditional."

"Well—the conditions are such as can in honour be complied with?—Sir Henry would propose no other."

"Honour is a conventional term, Isabella."

"The honour that I mean," replied Miss Linwood, "is not conventional, but synonymous with rectitude."

Meredith shook his head. He had an instinctive dislike of definitions, as they in Scripture, who loved darkness, had to the light. He was fond of enveloping his meaning in shadowy analogies, which, like the moon, often led astray, with a beautiful but imperfect and illusive light.

"Even rectitude must depend somewhat on position, Isabella," he replied. "He who is under the pressure of circumstances, and crowded on every side, cannot, like him who is perfectly free, stand upright and dispose his motions at pleasure."

"Do not mystify, Jasper, but tell me at once what the conditions are."

Isabella's face and voice expressed even more dissatisfaction than her words, and Meredith's reply was in the tone of an injured man.

"Pardon me, Miss Linwood, if my anxiety to prepare your mind by a winding approach has betrayed me into awkwardness. Certainly, Herbert's honour, the honour of *your* brother, cannot be dearer to any one than to me."

"You have always been his friend, I know," replied Isabella, evading Meredith's implication; "watchful nights, and more anxious days, have made me peevish—forgive me."

Meredith kissed the hand she extended to him. "You cannot imagine, Isabella, what it costs me to infuse another bitter drop into the cup already overflowing with accumulated anxieties. But your aunt's disasters are followed with new trials. Do not be alarmed—the threatening storm may pass over."

"Oh, tell me what it threatens!"

"Sir Henry has, within the last hour, received a despatch from Washington, disclaiming all part and lot in Herbert's return to the city, and expressing his deep regret that the sanctity of a flag of truce should be brought into question by one of his own officers."

"This was to be expected."

"Of course. But we all know that Washington has his resident spies in this city, and emissaries continually passing to and fro, in various disguises and under various pretences. However, assuming that he is exempt from any participation in this disastrous affair, common humanity would have dictated some plea for a brave and faithful officer,—some extenuation for a rash and generous youth. But Washington is always governed by this cold, selfish policy—"

"Is there not one word?"

"Not one!—There is, indeed, a private letter from Eliot Lee, stating that the motives of Herbert's return were wholly personal, and containing the particulars you had previously stated; and a very laboured appeal to Sir Henry, with a sort of endorsement from Washington, that these statements are entitled to whatever weight they might derive from the unquestionable integrity of Captain Lee."

"Thank Heaven! Eliot Lee has proved a true friend."

"Certainly, as far as writing a letter goes; but,

as you must perceive, Isabella, Sir Henry cannot act officially from the statements of a sister and friend. He will do all he can. He has empowered me to offer Herbert not only his release, but favour and promotion, provided he will renounce the bad cause to which he has too long adhered, and expiate the sin of rebellion by active service in the royal army."

"Never, never; never shall Herbert do this!"

"You are hasty, Isabella—hear me. If I convince Herbert that he has erred, why should he not retrieve his error?"

"Ay, Jasper, if you can *convince* him—but the mind cannot be convinced at pleasure—we cannot believe as we would—I know it is impossible."

Her voice faltered; she paused for a moment, a moment of the most painful embarrassment, and then proceeded with more firmness:—"I will be frank with you, Jasper. Herbert is not—you know him as well as I do—he is not of a temper to suffer long and patiently. He is like a bird, for ever singing and on the wing in sunshine, but silent and shrinking when the sky is overcast. He may—it breaks my heart to think it possible—but he may—his spirit broken by imprisonment and desertion, and stung by what will appear to him his commander's indifference to his fate, he may yield to the temptation you offer, and abandon a cause that he still believes, in the recesses of his heart, to be just and holy."

Meredith fixed his piercing eyes on Isabella.

It seemed that something new had been infused into her mind. He forbore, however, from expressing a suspicion, and merely said, "You place me in a flattering light, Isabella,—as the tempter of your brother."

"Oh no—you mistake me—you are only the medium through which temptation comes to him. But remember his infirmity—the infirmity of human nature, and do not increase the force of the temptation—do not make the worse appear the better reason, Jasper. I know you will not—at least I believe, I think, I hope—"

"For Heaven's sake, my dear friend," interrupted Meredith, "do not reduce your confidence in my integrity to any thing weaker than a hope. Now as I perceive that you would choose accurately to limit and define my agency, I entreat you to do so—*my* hope, my wish, my purpose, Isabella, is to be in all things moulded and governed by your will. Let us understand each other. I go to Herbert the advocate of a cause in which I, at least, have unwavering confidence—"

"Thank Heaven for that!" said Isabella, replying courageously to the equivocal curl of Meredith's lip.

He proceeded:—"I am permitted—am I not, to communicate Sir Henry's generous offer?"

"His offer—but do not call it generous. Nothing remitted—nothing forgiven. His oblivion of the past, and his future favour, are to be dearly paid for."

"Sir Henry's offer, then, without note or comment."

Isabella nodded assent.

"I may report, *à la lettre* Washington's renunciation, disclaimer, or whatever you may be pleased to call it?"

"Literally, Jasper."

"I may suggest to him—or do your primitive notions prohibit this?—that Washington's communication and Eliot's letter enable us to give an interpretation to his return to the city that will relieve him from the appearance of having been forced by circumstances into our ranks. Indeed, without any essential perversion, this return to the path of duty may appear to have been his deliberate intention in coming to the city. This, of course, would very favourably affect his standing with his fellow-officers—you hesitate. Isabella, forgive me for quoting the vulgar proverb—be not 'more nice than wise.' Why should not Herbert avail himself of a fortunate position—a favourable light?"

"Because it is a false light—a deceptive gloss. Do not, Jasper, over-estimate the uncertain, imperfect, and ignorant opinions of others—pray do not be offended; but is it not folly to look for our own image in other's minds, where, as in water, it may be magnified, or, as in the turbid stream, clouded and distorted, when in our own bosoms we have an unerring mirror?"

"Your theory is right, undoubtedly, Isabella—your sentiments lofty—no one can admire them

more than I do; but what is the use of standing on an eminence a hundred degrees above your fellow-mortals with whom you are destined to act? It is certain they will not come up to you, and as certain that, unless you are willing to live in the solitude of a hermit, useless and forgotten, it is wisest to come down to them." Meredith paused "We do not see eye to eye," thought Isabella; but she did not speak, and Meredith proceeded:—"God knows, Isabella, that it is my first wish to conform my opinions, my mind and heart, to you; but we must adapt ourselves to things as they are. Herbert is in a most awkward and fearful predicament. Sir Henry, like other public men, must be governed by policy. If your father's fortune or influence were important to the royal cause, Sir Henry might make an exception to the usual proceedings in similar cases in favour of his son; but, as he remarked to me to-day, your father is injudicious in his zeal, and such a friend often harms us more than an enemy. He says, too, that he finds it essential not to relax in severity towards the rebel sons of royalists. Nothing is more common than for families to divide in this way; their fathers remain loyal, the sons join the rebels; and Sir Henry deems it most politic to cut them off from all hope of immunity on account of the fidelity of their fathers. If Herbert does not accept Sir Henry's terms, it will be particularly unfortunate for him that he came into the city under the protection of a flag of truce; for, as Sir Henry remarked to me, it be-

hooves us to seize every occasion to abate the country's confidence in Washington's integrity, and certainly this is a tempting one."

"Does Sir Henry believe that Washington was privy to Herbert's coming to the city?"

"Oh, Lord—no!"

"And yet, he will be guilty of the falsehood and meanness of infusing this opinion into other men's minds, and call it policy!—Jasper, how is it that the religious obligations of truth, which govern man in his intercourse with his fellow—which rule us in our homes and at our firesides, have never presided in the councils of warriors nor in the halls of statesmen?"

"For no other reason that I know, Isabella, than that they would be exceedingly inconvenient there. 'Might makes right'—those that have the power will use it."

"Ah, Jasper," said Isabella, without responding to Meredith's simile; "the time is coming when that base dogma will be reversed, and right will make might. The Divinity is stirring within men, and the policy and power of these false gods, who fancy they have a chartered and transmitted right to all the good things of this fair world, shall fall before it, as Dagon fell prostrate before the ark of the Lord."

"I do not comprehend you, Isabella."

"I simply mean, that the time is at hand when the truth that all men are made in the image of God, and therefore all have equal rights and

equal duties, will not only be acknowledged in our prayers and churchyards, but will be the basis of government, and of public as well as of private intercourse."

"'When the sky falls'—these are odd speculations for a *young* lady."

"Speculations they are not. The hardest metals are melted in the furnace, to be recast in new forms; and old opinions and prejudices, harder, Jasper, than any metal, may be subdued and remoulded in these fiery times."

"And does our aunt Archer furnish the mould in which they are recast?—if she talks to you as she has to me of the redoubtable knight-errantry of the indomitable deliverer of her captive child, I do not wonder at this sudden inspiration of republicanism. It is rather a feminine mode, though, of arriving at political abstractions through their incarnation in a favourite hero."

A deep glow, partly hurt pride, partly consciousness, suffused Isabella's cheek. Her aunt's was the only mind whose direct influence she felt.

"You are displeased," he continued; "but you must forgive me, for I am in that state when 'trifles, light as air,' disturb me. My destiny, or rather, I should say, those hopes that shape destiny, seem to be under the control of some strange fatality, that I can neither evade nor understand. If I dared retrace to you the history of these hopes, from our childhood to this day, you would see how many times, when they have been most assu-

red, you have dashed them by some evident and inexplicable alienation from me. At our last interview—"

"When was it—when was it?" asked Isabella, in her nervousness and confusion, forgetting they had not met since the day of the dinner at Sir Henry Clinton's.

"*When*—have you forgotten our last meeting?"

"Oh, no—no; but ages have passed since—ages of anxiety and painful reflection."

"And have these ages, compressed as they have been into five days, changed your heart, Isabella?—or was it folly and presumption to hope—I will confess the whole extent of my presumption—to *believe*, that that heart, the object of all my hopes—that for which I only care to live, was—mine?" It was well that Isabella covered her face, for it expressed what she forbade her lips to speak.

"Any thing but this mysterious silence," continued Meredith, aware how near a suppressed agitation was to the confession he expected. "Let me, I beseech you, know my fate at once. It is more important to us both that it should now be decided than you can imagine."

"Oh, not now—not now, Jasper!"

Meredith was too acute not to perceive how near to a favourable decision was this "not now."

"And why not now, Isabella? Surely I have not seriously offended you. Think, for a moment, that after passing the last five days between the most anxious waiting at your door, and continued

efforts for Herbert, when I at last get access to you, you receive my plans for your brother coldly and doubtingly; and I find that while I was burning with impatience to see you, you had been occupied with abstruse meditations upon the rights of man! I was galled, I confess, Isabella; and if I seemed merely to treat them with levity, I deserve credit for mastery over stronger feelings." Isabella was half convinced that she had been unjust and almost silly. "You have it in your power," continued Meredith, "to infuse what opinions you will into my mind—to inspire my purpose —to govern my affections—to fix my destiny for ime and eternity. Oh, Isabella! do not put me off with this silence. Let this blessed moment decide our fate. Speak but one word, and I am bound to you for ever!"

That word of doom hovered on Isabella's lips; her hand, which he had taken, was no longer cold and passive, but returned the grasp of his;—doubt and resolution were vanishing together; and the balance that had been wavering for years was rapidly descending in Meredith's favour, when the door opened and Mrs. Linwood appeared. At first starting back with delighted surprise, and then receiving a fresh impulse from her husband's impatient voice calling from his room, she said, "You must come to your father, instantly, Isabella." Isabella gave one glance to Meredith and obeyed the summons. Meredith felt as if some fiend had dashed from his hand the sparkling cup just raised

to his lips. His face, that expressed the conflict of hope just assured, and of sudden disappointment, was a curious contrast to Mrs. Linwood's, smiling all over. She believed she at last saw the happy issue of her long-indulged expectations. She waited in vain for Meredith to speak; and finally came to the conclusion, that there were occasions in life when the best bred people forgot propriety. "I am quite mortified that I intruded," she said; "but you know Mr. Linwood—he is so impatient, and the gout you know is so teasing, and he never can bear Isabella out of his sight, and he is just on the sofa for the first time since this attack, and I unluckily hurt his foot. You know the gout has left his stomach and gone into his foot. It is much less dangerous there, but I don't think he is any more patient with it; and I happened just to touch the tip end of his toe in putting under the cushion, and he screamed out so for Isabella. He thinks she can do every thing so much better than anybody else. Indeed, she is a first-rate nurse—so devoted, too—she has not left her father's bedside till now for five days and nights; she seemed to forget herself a little now (spoken in parenthesis and significantly). Whatever man may think before marriage, Mr. Meredith, he finds afterward, especially if he is subject to the gout, good nursing is every thing. I often say, All a woman need know is how to take good care of her family and of the sick. However, that and something more Isabella knows."

"Madam?" said Meredith, waked from his revery by Isabella's name, the only word of this long speech, meant to be so effective and appropriate, that he had heard. He slightly bowed and left the house.

"How odd!—how very odd!" thought Mrs. Linwood. "When Mr. Linwood declared himself, he directly told my father and mother, and the wedding-day and all was settled before he went out of the house. I wish I knew just how matters stand. Belle will not say a word to me unless it's a fixed thing: so I shall find out one way or the other. I am sure I used to tell my mother every thing; but Belle don't take after me: however, she is a dear girl, and I am sure I ought to be satisfied with her.—If she should refuse Jasper Meredith!!"

This last supposition of a tremendous possibility was quite too much for a solitary meditation; and the good lady started from her position at the window, where she had stood gazing after Meredith, and returned to her customary avocations.

CHAPTER XX.

"Un gentil-homme merveilleusement sujet à la goutte, estant pressé par les médecins de laisser de tout l'usage des viandes salées, avoit accoustumé de respondre plaisamment, que sur les efforts et tourmens du mal il vouloit avoir à qui s'en prendre; et que s'escriant et mauldissant tantôt le cervelat, tantôt le jambon, il s'en sentoit d'aultant allegé."—MONTAIGNE.

ISABELLA returned to her father's apartment in a frame of mind rather adverse to her performing accurately the tasks of the "best nurse in the world."

"What the devil ails you, Belle?" exclaimed her father; "you are putting the cushion under the wrong foot!—there—there—that will do—that's right—now kiss me, Belle, dear. I did not mean to speak cross to you; but your mother has been fidgeting here a little eternity. I wonder what the deuse is the reason she can never make any thing lie easy. She does try her best, poor soul; but she has no faculty—none in the world. What is this good news, Belle, she tells me Jasper has brought?"

"It amounts to nothing, sir."

"Humph!—I thought as much." A pause ensued. "Hark!" resumed Mr. Linwood—"is not

that Helen Ruthven's voice on the stairs?—call her in, Belle." Miss Ruthven entered. "Glad to see you, my dear—like to see living folks alive. Belle is sitting up here like a tomb-stone, neither seeing, hearing, nor moving. 'How am I, child?'—alive, thank God, and better—the enemy has cleared out of the citadel, and is firing away at the outworks—expect to eat a capital dinner to-day—Major St. Clair has sent me a brace of woodcock—a man of taste is Major St. Clair! Woodcock, currant-jelly, and a glass of madeira, will make a Christian of me again. I should be as happy as the king if it were not—heigh ho, poor Herbert! Oh, Jupiter Ammon, what a twinge!—Belle, do loosen that flannel—your mother has drawn it up like a vice—there—there—that will do. Do for conscience' sake tell me some news, Helen, my dear."

"I came on purpose, sir, to tell Isabella a famous piece of news; but I met Jasper Meredith—"

"What of that, child?"

"He has told the news, sir, of course."

"He may have told it to Belle; but I am none the better for it: so pray tell on, my dear."

"Meredith's mother has arrived."

"His mother!" echoed Isabella.

"His mother!" repeated Mr. Linwood, in a voice that drowned hers—"When?—how?—where?"

"Ah," thought Miss Ruthven, with infinite satisfaction, "they are not in smooth water yet, or this fact would have been announced."—"The ship,"

she replied to Mr. Linwood, "arrived last night, and is at anchor below, waiting for a wind."

"What ship, child?"

"The Thetis, or Neptune, or Minerva?"

"It can't be, my child; there is no such ship expected."

"It may be called by some other name, sir; I never remember ships' names; but Mrs. Meredith has most certainly arrived, and her niece, Lady Anne Seton, with her."

"Extraordinary—most extraordinary! Did Jasper ever speak to you of expecting them, Belle?"

"Never, sir."

"Do, for Heaven's sake, Belle, speak more than one word at a time—go on, Helen—what else did you hear?"

Miss Ruthven was nothing loath to speak, and she proceeded:—"I met St. Clair at Mrs. Archer's. By-the-way, I admire your aunt excessively, Belle." Miss Helen was a wholesale flatterer, and practised all the accesses to the heart through admiration of one's favourite friends and relations. "How sweetly she is settled; but I could not but laugh at her scruples about using the Ludlows' furniture. I told her it was the good and universal rule of the city to make the most of what the rebel runaways had left behind them. You do not assent, Belle. I am sure your father agrees with me—do you not, Mr. Linwood?"

"Mrs. Archer has a way of her own. Go on

with your news, my child—was Mrs. Meredith expected?"

"I really do not know, sir; Isabella has the best right to know."

Isabella blushed painfully. This was the answer Helen Ruthven wished, and she proceeded:—"St. Clair was with Jasper when the news arrived, and he says Meredith appeared delighted; but then St. Clair does not penetrate below the surface, and Meredith is a bit of a diplomatist—don't you think so, Isabella?"

"It is neither very flattering to Jasper nor to his mother," replied Isabella, evading Helen Ruthven's annoying question, "to doubt his joy at the arrival after a ten years' separation."

"Perhaps not; but then we must see things as they are—mothers are sometimes inconvenient appendages, and sometimes—troublesome spies. At any rate, I do not believe it is pure maternal love that has brought the lady out. St. Clair says she is not that kind of person; she loves her ease, he says, and loves the world of London, and would not come here without a powerful motive. Your aunt said that the pleasure of seeing her son would be motive enough to most mothers; but your aunt is all mother. By-the-way, what a sweet fellow Ned Archer is. I did not see Lizzy—her mother says she is not yet recovered from her fright—she is so nervous—poor thing! I do not wonder."

"Go on, Helen. What motive did you find out

for Madam Meredith?—wise heads yours, to think a woman acts from motive."

"Ah, sir, but we did find one; a right, rational, and probable one too. Perhaps you do not know that Lady Anne Seton is Mrs. Meredith's ward, and that she is, moreover, a rich heiress."

"Well, what of that?"

"Oh, a vast deal 'of that'—a fortune is a most important item in a young lady's catalogue of charms; and poor Mrs. Meredith flatters herself she has a son yet to be charmed."

Miss Ruthven fixed her eyes, that had the quality of piercing, on Isabella; but Isabella's were riveted to the embroidery on which her hands were employed, and she did not raise them, nor move a muscle of her face.

Mr. Linwood breathed out an expressive "humph," and asked if fortune was the young lady's only charm.

"Oh, no! St. Clair gave me a catalogue of them as long as my arm. In the first place, she is just sweet eighteen—very pretty, though a little too much inclined to *embonpoint*—rather pale, too—very sweet eyes, hazel, soft, and laughing—not a classic nose; but pretty noses are rare—hair of the loveliest brown; but that matters not now, when no one, save Isabella, wears 'hair of the colour God chooses'—a sweet pretty mouth she has, St. Clair says; and her hands, arms, and feet

are such beauties, that she has been asked to sit to a sculptor."

"The deuse, girls! She'll cut you all out"

"She may prove a dangerous rival, Isabella."

Isabella looked disturbed, and was so; not so much at Miss Ruthven's allusion as at a sudden recollection. Meredith had urged her immediate decision as momentous to them both. "Is he," thought she, "afraid that his resolution, his affections, are not strong enough to resist a siege from his mother?" Rallying her spirits, she asked "if St. Clair had only furnished a schedule of Lady Anne's personal charms?"

"Oh, my dear friend, yes. She enters the lists armed *cap-à-pie*—she has been partly educated in France—dances like a sylph, and speaks French like a Parisian angel."

"Don't be gulled by that, girls; if she sputters away in French, it is a pretty sure sign she has nothing worth saying in English."

"But St. Clair says, Mr. Linwood, that she is agreeable and good-humoured—a sort of person that everybody likes."

"Then I sha'n't like her, that's flat; for I don't like that kind of fit that fits everybody."

"But you like her name?—Lady Anne Seton. There is such a charm in a name—a title too—a rose by any other name might be as sweet; but a name with the prefix of 'lady' is far more capti-

vating for it, Lady Isabella. There is a coronet in the very sound.

"Do you know St. Clair says, that if Isabella were to appear in England, she might soon write herself lady?" She added, in a whisper, "he says, Belle—don't be offended—that if an earl, or even a baronet were to address you, it would fix a certain person at once; he has such deference for rank, that if you were merely to have it within your grasp, you would be perfectly irresistible to him."

"St. Clair talks idly," replied Isabella, proudly, and the tears, in spite of her efforts to repress them, starting into her eyes; "he knows very little of Jasper Meredith." Alas! such a suggestion, even from such a source, had power to wound her. "Helen," she added, "papa is getting tired, and must take his drops, and try for his nap."

"Bless me, my dear, forgive me for staying; I always get so interested in *your interests*. Good morning, dear Mr. Linwood; make haste and get well. Farewell, dear Isabella, I am going to reconnoitre, and will report progress;" and kissing both father and daughter, she departed.

"Helen Ruthven is very fond of you, Belle," said her father.

Isabella smiled; but it was a bitter smile. She did not care to rectify her father's opinion; but she thought Helen Ruthven much like a bee, who stings while laden with sweets.

"Very odd, Mrs. Meredith coming out just now,"

continued Mr. Linwood; "the ocean covered with rebel privateers—bringing over this girl too—a right woman's move. Give me my drops, Belle—they will sharpen my appetite—thank you, dear—Pah! what's this—that devilish rhubarb—you've spoiled my dinner, Belle."

"A thousand pardons, papa—take this water—now rest a little, and then your drops."

"Never mind, my dear—set down the glass, and come and kneel down by me, Belle. There's something the matter with you, my child; I am sure of it. You cannot deceive me, Belle—you are as transparent as that glass. Twice since you came from the parlour you have blundered, first with the cushion, and now the drops. It's an uncommon thing for you, my dear, to look one way and row t'other. Jasper was with you, Belle—has he offered himself?—Don't hesitate—I am in no condition to be trifled with—has Jasper done it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you accepted or rejected him?"

"Neither."

"Do you love him, Belle?"

"Dear papa!" said she, springing to her feet, and walking to the extremity of the room; "do not question me any farther."

"Come back to me, Belle—kneel down by me again, and listen to me. I can tell you a love-story: yes—little like a lover as I now seem.

When I was eight-and-twenty, still in the hey-day of life, I loved, with my whole soul, your aunt Archer—don't flinch, child—listen. She was very young, just from school; twelve years younger than I, eight than your mother; but then she promised all she has since been. She rejected me. In a fit of pique I married your mother—mark the consequences. She has been the poor, subservient, domestic drudge—"

"Oh, papa! pray—"

"I am telling a plain story, Belle, and you must hear it; but never mind what she has been. You can't dispute that I have been unreasonable, peevish, passionate, and so we have worn away life together; and now, when the curtain is about to fall, I look back on my useless existence—my wasted talents—my lost opportunities, and mourn over it all—in vain!" His voice was choked with emotion.

"Oh, do not say so, sir; you are the dearest, kindest of fathers."

"To you, Belle; and what thanks to me for that? I have been proud of you—I have loved you—there it is; if I had loved your mother, I should have been the kindest of husbands. Love makes virtue easy. 'Love,' the Scripture says, 'is the fulfilling of the law.' I say those must be saints who fulfil the law without it. Conscience does not sleep even in such a self-lover as I am; and think you, Belle, I am not often tormented

with the thought, that I was created for something better than to make my dinner the chief good of every day—to pamper myself with the bounties of Providence, and fret and fume at every straw in my way? No, my dear child, you never have felt my petty tyranny; but you hold the master-key to my heart. Poor Herbert! I sacrificed him to a gust of passion. It was I that drove him into the ranks of the rebels."

"Pray compose yourself, sir; do not say any more."

"I must finish what I began upon—I have gone aside from it—Jasper Meredith! Ah, Belle, that name conjures the blood back to your cheeks—Jasper Meredith has fortune which, thanks to this unnatural war, we want enough. He has rank which I honour, and talents which all men honour; but if he has not your whole heart, child, let him and his fortune, rank, and talents, go to the devil."

"Thanks, dearest father, for your counsel; and trust me, I will be assured of something better and higher than fortune, rank, or talents, before I bind myself in that indissoluble bond."

"I believe it, Belle; I know it." Mr. Linwood felt, though he did not perfectly comprehend the emotions that at this moment irradiated Isabella's beautiful face. "And, my child," he continued, "ever since you have come to woman's estate, I have resolved that whoever you loved, let his name, condition, fortune, be what it would, your hand

should go with your heart, Belle; and I fear not to stand by my resolve, for I know that your giving your heart means your respect, honour, esteem, and all that one of God's creatures can feel for another."

"You are right, sir."

"I'm sure of it—now kiss me, dear—that's a seal to the bond. Read to me the last London Gazette —no matter where. I'll doze away the time till dinner."

CHAPTER XXI.

"Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?"

We ought not to tax too severely the ingenuity of our readers, and therefore must briefly explain our poor friend Kisel's sudden appearance with the marauders. He had waked from his sound sleep on Gurdon Coit's floor at the moment that Eliot galloped off with his associates towards Mrs. Archer's, and in spite of all remonstrance he had mounted his horse and followed him. He had the dog's affection, but not his instinct; and failing to find the right track, he fell in with the skinners instead of rejoining his master. It occurred to Hewson that the poor fellow might be a useful agent in reconveying the child to Mrs. Archer; and ordering his men to ride on each side of Kisel, he enforced his continuance in the company into which he had unwittingly fallen. One flash of hope came upon him at the sight of his master, but he was soon beyond the possibility of Eliot's pursuit or rescue; and with a heavy heart he commended him to that Power that had seemed hitherto to care for him as for the ravens and all helpless things.

When Eliot reached Gurdon Coit's, he found

that the general and men from West Point had been gone for a half hour. Coit stood before the door, holding by the halter a fine bay horse, and as soon as he had expressed his heartfelt joy at Eliot's report from Mrs. Archer's, he said, "I am thinking, captain, you are pretty near breaking the tenth commandment—no wonder, this is a noble animal; how he paws the dust, as though he smelt the battle afar off. But here's a note the gen'ral left for you."

As some among the youth of the present day may be shocked at the spelling of the canonized old general, before Eliot reads the note we must premise, that as neither reading, writing, nor spelling (Jack Cade to the contrary notwithstanding) "come by nature," the general's accomplishment in these arts was very limited; and we beg them to remember, that even in these days of universal learning, a patriot-soldier might be forgiven very imperfect orthography—but to the note.

"Dere, galunt young friend—I could have huged you before we parted, I have been so pleased with you from the beginin to the end of this biznes. I felt for you in the loss of your hors, and I can't bear the thots of your riden that sorry jade, that's only been used to prouling about o' nights, on all sorts of diviltry; so I've ordered Gurden to put into your hands a *likely cretur*, that our fokes at home has sent up to be sold to the ofisers in camp.

Take it, my boy, and don't feel beholden to me; for when the war is at end, and it's conveneyent, we'll settle for it.

"Yours, tell death, and ever after, if the Lord permits.

"ISRAEL PUTNAM."

We will leave Eliot's surprise, joy, and gratitude to be imagined. The last emotion was greatly augmented by his benefactor's exempting him from the pain of a pecuniary obligation. He was soon mounted on his new steed, and retracing his way, with many a delightful recollection to counteract his anxieties. These however prevailed when he was ushered into Washington's presence, and felt the whole weight of the task Herbert's rashness had imposed on him. He first delivered his despatches, and had the happiness of receiving his commander's thanks for the manner in which he had performed his mission. Washington wasted no time in formal compliments, and Eliot felt his approval to be more than the praise of other men. Might not that approval be withdrawn? Eliot must encounter the risk, and he proceeded to ask the general's patience while he recounted the misdemeanors and misfortunes of his friend.

It is well known that Washington's moderation and equanimity were the effects of the highest principle, not the gift of nature. He was constitutionally subject to gusts of passion, but he had

acquired a power, almost divine (and doubtless from a divine source), by which he could direct the whirlwind and subdue the storm. A power that has seemed to the believing to verify that prophetic verse in Proverbs, which accords with his natal day, and which so truly graduates and expounds his virtues—"He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."

Eliot saw, as he proceeded in his narrative, that Washington's brow contracted, and that "the angry spot" glowed there; but he continued to speak with the calmness and manly freedom that suited a man conscious of his own integrity and zealous for his friend, nor did he change colour till Washington, checking the hasty strides he was making up and down the apartment, said, "What *proof* is there, Captain Lee, that you were not privy to this mad and disgraceful expedition of your friend?"

"None, sir," replied Eliot, unappalled, but not unmoved. Washington seemed struck with the dignity of his manner; his countenance somewhat relaxed as Eliot proceeded:—"There may be probabilities as conclusive to a generous mind as proofs to a common one. You will perceive, sir, that the same action that was indiscretion in my friend would have been crime in me, honoured as I was by your trust. And further, that I could have had no temptation to a violation of that trust but a desire to oblige my friend, while he was urged on and blinded to consequences by the intensity of

filial and fraternal love, which, allow me to say, sir, has been kept in long and painful abeyance by his devotion to his country."

"Your zeal for your friend is generous, Captain Lee. Fidelity in friendship is a bond for integrity in other matters; be assured, I will not hastily withdraw the confidence I have with so much reason placed in you. I must take time to reflect on this matter. To what did you allude as having occurred last night?"

Eliot briefly related the affair at Mrs. Archer's. He saw a smile on Washington's lips when he spoke of his hearty coadjutor "the gen'ral." He concluded by saying he trusted he had not offended by following what seemed to him the imperative dictates of humanity.

"No, my friend—no," replied Washington, not unmoved; "war too often cuts us off from the humanities—in God's name let's perfect them when we may. I am engaged now, come to me again this evening."

Eliot left his commander somewhat relieved, but still not without deep anxiety for Linwood. He had reason for solicitude. No man that ever lived more jealously guarded against the appearance of evil than Washington. One who kept with his exactness the account with conscience, might, in ordinary circumstances, have afforded to be careless of appearances, and regardless of public opinion; but he was aware that his reputation belonged to his country, that it was identified with the cause

he had espoused, the cause of liberty and popular government; and how has that glorious cause profited by it? Heralded by his spotless name, it has gone forth to restore the order of God's providence; to abase the high, and raise up those that were bowed down; to break the golden sceptre, to overthrow thrones, to open Bastiles, to unbind chains, to reclaim the deserts that man had made, and to sow at broadcast the seeds of knowledge, virtue, and happiness!

The issue of Eliot's second interview with Washington is already known, so far as it appeared by the despatches sent to New-York. He had the consolation of being assured that not a shadow of distrust remained on Washington's mind. Never man more needed solace in some shape than did Eliot at this conjuncture of his affairs. On first going to his quarters he found there a packet from his mother. He pressed it to his lips, and eagerly broke the seal. The following is a copy of his mother's letter.

"My dear Son,—I perceive by your letters of the first, which, thanks to a kind Providence, have duly come to hand, that it is now nearly three months since you have heard from us. Much good and much evil may befall in three months! Much good have I truly to be grateful for: and chiefly

that your life and health have been thus precious in the sight of the Lord, and that you have received honour at the hand of man (of which our good Dr. Wilson made suitable mention in his prayer last Sabbath); and, as I humbly trust, approval from Him who erreth not.

"We have had a season of considerable worldly anxiety. The potato-crop looked poorly, and our whole harvest was cut off by the blight in the rye, which, as you see in the newspapers, has been fatal through Massachusetts. This calamity has been greatly aggravated by the embargo they have laid on their flour in the southern states. The days seemed to be coming upon us when 'plenty should be forgotten in our land, and sore famine overspread the borders thereof.'—Our people have been greatly alarmed, and there have been fasts in all our churches, at which the carnally-minded have murmured, saying it would be time enough to fast when the famine came. It is indeed a time of desolation in our land—'there is no more in our streets the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness—the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride'—the step of the father and the brother are no more heard on our thresholds, and we stretch our ears for tidings of battles that may lay them in the dust. Think you, my son, that our children's children, when they bear their sheaves rejoicing, will remember those who sowed in tears, and with much patience and many prayers?

"For my own part, my dear Eliot, I have had but little part in this worldly anxiety, for divers reasons which you will presently see. One care eats up another." (Bessie's name was here written and effaced.) "Let me tell you, before I forget it, that the Lord has smiled on our Indian corn. I had an acre put in the south meadow, which you know is a warm soil, and Major Avery tells me it will prove a heavy yield. He is a kind neighbour (as indeed we all try to be in these times), and called yesterday to ask me to get into his wagon, and take a ride, saying it would cheer me up to see the golden ears peeping out of their seared and rustling leaves; but I did not feel to go."—(Here again Bessie's name was written, and again effaced—the tender mother shrunk from giving the blow that must be given.) "Do not have any care, dear Eliot, about our basket and our store; they are sufficiently filled. The children are nicely prepared for winter, even to their shoes. Just as I was casting about to see how I should get them made, there being no shoemaker left short of Boston, Jo Warren came home, his term of service having expired, and he, as he says, 'liking much better the clack of his hammer and lap-stone than bloody soldiering.'

"My dear son, I have written thus far without touching on the subject which fills heart and mind, day and night. I felt it to be suitable to mention the topics above; but I knew if I left them to the

last you would read without reading, and thereby lose the little comfort they might give you. Fain would I finish here! God grant you may receive with submission what follows.—You know, that never since you went away have I been able to hold out any encouragement to you about your poor sister. The dear child struggled, and struggled, but only exhausted her strength without making any headway; I shall always think it was from the first more weakness of body than any thing else, for she had such a clear sense of what was right, and this it was that weighed her down—a for ever tormenting sense that she was wasting in idle feelings the life and faculties that God had given to her. She tried to assist me in family duties, but she moved about like a machine; and often her sewing would drop from her hands, and she would sit silent and motionless for hours.

"In the first part of Herbert Linwood's visit she was more like her former self—old feelings seemed to revive, and I had hopes—but oh! they were suddenly dashed, for immediately on his going away she seemed to have such self-reproach—such fear that she had foregone her duty, and had for ever forfeited your confidence. All night she was feverish and restless, and during the day she would sit and weep for hours together. She never spoke but to accuse herself of some wrong committed, or some duty unperformed. When the clock struck she would count the strokes, and you could see the

beatings of her heart answer to each of them, and then she would weep till the hour came round again. Dr. Wilson and some of our godly women hoped she was under conviction; but I did not favour their talking to her as often as they wished, for I knew that her health was much broken, her mind hurt, and that in this harp of a thousand strings (as Dr. Watts says) there were many they did not understand.

"Through the summer her flesh has wasted away till she seemed but the shadow of her former self. Her eyes appeared larger, and as the shadows deepened about them, of a deeper blue than ever—sometimes as I looked at her she startled me; it seemed to me as if all of mortality were gone, and I were standing in the presence of a visible spirit. There was such a speaking, mournful beauty about her, that even strangers—rough people too—would shed tears when they looked at her.

"She never spoke of ——. If the children mentioned his name, or but alluded to him, she seemed deaf and palsied. She never approached the honeysuckle window where they used to sit. She never touched the books he read to her—her favourite books; and, one after another, she put away the articles of dress he had noticed and admired. Still with all these efforts she grew worse, till her reason seemed to me like the last ray of the sun before its setting.

"Two weeks ago she brought me a small box,

enveloped and sealed, and asked me to keep it for her; 'be sure,' she said, 'and put it where I cannot find it—be sure, mother.' From this moment there was a change—it seemed as if a pressure were taken off—from hour to hour her spirits rose—she talked with more than her natural quickness and cheerfulness—joined in the children's sports, and was full of impracticable plans of doing good, and wild expectations of happiness to all the world. I saw a fearful brightness in her eye. I knew her happiness was all a dream; but still it was a relief to see the dear child out of misery. I hoped, and feared, and lived on, trembling from hour to hour. Last night she asked me for her box, and when she had taken it she threw her arms around me, and looked in my face smiling—O! what a wild, strange smile it was. She then kissed the children and went to her room. She has scarcely been in bed five minutes together for the last fortnight; and as she did not come to breakfast in the morning, I hoped she was still sleeping, and truly thankful for this symptom that her excitement was abating, I kept the house still. Ten o'clock came, and not yet a sound from her room—an apprehension darted through my mind—I ran up stairs—her room was empty, her bed untouched.

"On the table, unsealed, was the packet I enclose to you. I read it, and was relieved of my worst fear. Our kind neighbours went yesterday in

search of her, but in vain—last evening we heard the tramp of a horse to the door, and it proved to be Steady. He has been kept in the home-pasture all the fall; and it seems the poor child, who you know is so timid that she never before rode without you or —— at her side, had put on the saddle and bridle, and started in the night. How far she rode we can only conjecture from Steady appearing quite beat out. Major Avery judges he may have travelled eighty miles, out and home. You will conclude with me that it is Bessie's intention to go to New-York; and when I think of her worn and distracted condition, and the state of the country through which she must pass, filled with hostile armies and infested with outlaws, do I sin in wishing she were dead beneath her father's roof? If any thing can be done, you will devise and execute —my head is sick with thinking, and my heart faint with sorrowing. Farewell, my beloved son. Let us not, in our trouble, forget that we are all, and especially the poor, sick, wandering lamb of our flock, in the hands of a good Being who doth not willingly afflict us.—Your loving, grieving mother,

"S. Lee."

The first part of Bessie's letter appeared to have been written at intervals, and some weeks antecedent to the conclusion. It was evidently traced with a weak and faltering hand, and had been drenched with her tears. She began:

"Dear brother Eliot" (the word "dear" was effaced and re-written): "I am but a hypocrite to call you 'dear' Eliot, for all permitted affections are devoured by one forbidden one. The loves that God implanted have withered and died away under the poisonous shadow of that which has been sown in my heart—think you by the evil spirit, Eliot? I sometimes fear so. I used to love our overkind mother; and for our little brothers and sisters my heart did seem to be one fountain of love, ever sweet, fresh, and overflowing; and you, oh Eliot, how fondly—proudly I loved you!—and now, if I were to see you all dead before me, it would move me no more than to see the idle leaves falling from the trees."

"I have read your letters over and over again, till they have fallen to pieces with the continual dropping of my hot tears; but every syllable is imprinted on my heart. You did not believe you 'sister would waste her sensibility, the precious food of life, in moping melancholy.' Oh, Eliot, how much better must I have appeared to you than I was! I have been all my life a hypocrite. You believed 'my mind had a self-rectifying power,' and I imposed this belief on you! I am ready, now, to bow my head in the dust for it. 'Love,' said your letter, 'can never be incurable when it is a disease: that is to say, when its object is unworthy.' Ah, my dear brother, there was your

fatal mistake. It was I that was unworthy—it was your simple sister that, in her secret, unconfessed thoughts, believed he loved her, knowing all the while that his lot was cast with the high, the gifted, the accomplished—with such as Isabella Linwood, and not with one so humble in condition, so little graced by art as I am. I do not blame him. Heaven knows I do not. 'Self-rectifying power!' Eliot, talk to the reed, that has been uprooted and borne away by the tides of the ocean, of its 'self-rectifying power!'"

A long interval had elapsed after writing the above; and the subsequent almost illegible scraps indicated a mind in ruins.

"Oh, Eliot, pray—pray come home! They are all persecuting me. The children laugh at me, and whistle after me; and when I am asleep, they blow his name in my ears. Mother looks at me, and will not speak."

"They have printed up all the books. Even the Bible has nothing but his name from beginning to end. I can never be alone; evil spirits are about me by day and by night;—my brother, I am tormented."

"Eliot, my doom is spoken! Would that it were to cut down the cumberer of the ground! but,

no: I am to stand for ever on the desolate shore, stricken and useless, and see the river of life glide by. The day, as well as the night, is solitary; and there is no joyful voice therein."

"Oh, memory!—memory!—memory! what an abyss of misery art thou! The sun rises and sets—the moon rolls over the sky—the stars glide on in their appointed paths—the seasons change, but no change cometh to me—the past, the past is all—there is no present, no future!"

"I remember hearing Dr. Wilson preach about sin deserving infinite punishment, because it was against an Infinite Being. I did not comprehend him then—now I do. In vain I raise my faded eyes and fevered hands to God."

The remainder was written in a more assured and rapid hand.

"Eliot, you have seen those days, have you not? when clouds gathered over the firmament; when, one after another, each accustomed and dear object was lost in their leaden folds, when they grew darker and came nearer, till you felt yourself wrapped about in their chilling drapery, and you feared the blessed sun was blotted out of Heaven. Suddenly God's messenger hath come forth—the clouds have risen at his bidding, and unveiled his

beautiful works. The smiling waters and the green fields, one after another, have appeared—the silvery curtain has rolled up the mountain's side, and then melted away and left the blue vault spotless. Such darkness has oppressed me; such brightness is now above and around me. Dear Eliot how glad you will be! My spirits dance as they did in my childhood. The days are all clear, and the nights so beautiful, that I would not sleep if I could. Shame to those who steep themselves in the dull and brutish oblivion of sleep, when the intelligences of Heaven are abroad on the moonbeams, calling to the wakeful spirit to leave the drowsy world and join their glorious company—to career from star to star, and commune in the silence of night with their creator. Oh, Eliot! I have heard the music 'of the young eyed cherubim;' and I have learned secrets—wonderful secrets of the offices and relations of spirits, if I were sure you would believe them—but no, you cannot. The mind must be prepared by months of suffering—it must pass a dark and winding way to reach (*while yet on earth*) the bright eminence where I stand. But take courage, brother; when you pass the bounds of time you will hear, and see, and know what I now do.

"You will wonder how I have escaped the manacles that so long bound me. I cannot explain all now; but thus much I am permitted to say, that they were riveted by certain charms: and I cannot be

assured of my freedom till I myself return them to him from whom they came—to him who has so long been the lord of my affections and master of my mind. Then, and not till then, shall I be the 'self-rectified' being you blindly but truly predicted. I must go to New-York; but mind, dear brother, and indulge no idle fears for me. Do you remember once, when we read Comus together, wishing your sister might, like the sweet lady there, be attended by good spirits—dear Eliot, I am. I cannot always see them through this thick veil of mortality, but I can both hear and feel them.

"Our good mother pesters me so. Should you think, brother, that a being accompanied as I am could eat and drink, and lie down and sleep as other mortals do? Oh, no! And, besides, are they not all the time praying that the Lord would send corn into their empty garners; and yet, poor dull souls, they cannot see their prayer is answered, when I am fed and satisfied with bread from Heaven—sweet, spiritual food!

"I shall set forward to-night when they are all steeped in this sleep they would fain stupify me with. I have not hinted to our mother my purpose, because, dear Eliot, since you are gone she is quite different from what she was. I would say it to none but you in the world; but the truth is, she has grown very conceited, and would not believe one word of my superior knowledge. I do not blame her. The time is coming when the

scales will fall from her eyes. Farewell, dear brother,—'angels guard thee,' as Jasper used to say;—I can write his name now with a steady hand—what a change! They do guard me—the blessed angels! Once more, fear nothing, Eliot. In going, I am attended by that 'strong siding champion, conscience;' if I stay, he will desert me."

Eliot's manliness was vanquished, and he wept like a child over his sister's letter. He reproached himself for having left home. He bitterly reproached himself for not having foreseen the danger of her long, exclusive, and confiding intercourse with Meredith. He was almost maddened when he thought of the perils to which she must have been exposed, and of his utter inability to save her from one of them. The only solacing thought that occurred to him was the extreme improbability that her fragile and exhausted frame could support the fatigues she must encounter, and that even now, while he wept over her letter (a fortnight had elapsed since it was written), her gentle spirit might have entered upon its eternal rest.

CHAPTER XXII.

"This fierce spirit of liberty is stronger in the English colonies, probably, than in any other people of the earth."—BURKE.

MEREDITH's last interview with Isabella, broken off so inopportunely by her mother, had left him perplexed and disappointed. His love for her, if analyzed, might have exhibited much of the dross that belongs to a selfish and worldly spirit,—pride and vanity, and something perhaps yet lower than these; still it was a redeeming sentiment, and if it had not force enough to conquer all that was evil in him, it at least inspired some noble aspirations.

He had been apprized of his mother's arrival by a sort of official note which she sent him from the Narrows, the amount of which was, "that she had come out because she could see no prospect of an end to the atrocious war—that she had brought her dear niece, Lady Anne, because it was as impossible to separate from her as to prolong her own cruel absence from her son." Meredith interpreted this note as readily as if he were reading a conventional diplomatic cipher, and thus re-read it. "The term of my dear niece, Lady Anne's mourning, is nearly expired—she will have scores of suitors, and her fortune will pass out of the

family; while you, my dear son, are throwing yourself away upon the broken-down Linwoods—the only hope is in my crossing the horrible Atlantic, and braving storms and privateers."

Strange as it may seem, though thus forewarned, he felt that he was not forearmed, at least in panoply divine; he distrusted his power of resistance, and was anxious to secure himself with grappling irons before he should be wafted by his moth er's influence whither she would. Once assured by her own lips, of what he had but the faintest doubt, that Isabella Linwood loved him, his fate would be fixed. He could tell his mother it was so, and she would be saved the trouble of setting her toils, and he from the necessity of avoiding her snare, and—from the danger of falling into it. If Jasper Meredith's virtue was infirm, he was sagacious, and had at least the merit of being conscious of the tottering base on which it rested.

When he left Isabella, he deferred his filial duties, and proceeded forthwith to the city prison, then called the Provost, where the prisoners of war who were in the city, with the exception of such officers as were on their parole, were herded together, and treated in all respects like criminals.

Meredith, provided with an order from Robertson, the commandant, and countersigned by Cunningham (of infamous memory), the keeper of the city prison, made his way through dens crowded with American soldiers, to a small inner cell which

Linwood was allowed the privilege of occupying alone. Meredith had paid Linwood daily visits, had reported to him his father's condition, and had each day laboured to give such a bias to his mind as to lead him to the course which he was now authorized to set before him.

"Good morning, and good news for you, Linwood!" he said, as he shut the door after him.

"Ha! has General Washington interposed for me?"

Meredith shrugged his shoulders: "I alluded to your father."

"God forgive me! he is better, then?"

"Quite relieved—the gout has gone to the feet, and if—if he were easy about you, there would be no danger of a relapse. But, my dear Linwood, you are looking ill yourself."

"Not ill—no, but deused hungry. Cunningham's short and sour commons leave an aching void, I assure you." Linwood placed his hands upon the seat of his most painful sensations at the moment.

"I hoped the partridges and madeira I smuggled in yesterday would have made you independent of Cunningham's tender mercies, for twenty-four hours at least."

"Don't mention them just now, if you love me. I worked myself up to making them over to some poor wretches out there, who are dying by inches of bad and insufficient food—but hunger is selfish, and sharp-set as I now am, I am afraid I shall re-

pont me of my good deeds—so don't speak of them. Are there no despatches, no letters, nothing yet from West Point?"

Meredith told him of the official communication received from Washington, and the letter from Eliot; of the one he spoke contemptuously, of the other coldly. He then paused for Herbert to give utterance to the disappointment expressed in his truth-telling face, but he was silent, and Meredith proceeded:—"One would think that a brave young officer who, like you, had sacrificed every thing to a fancied duty, deserved a kind word at least from his commander; but these old-fashioned courtesies have a little too much of the aristocratic feudal taint for your republican leader. They savour of the protection the lord extends to his follower in return for services that are more cheaply paid in continental rags, or in the promises of King Congress! It is a hard service where there is neither honour, favour, nor profit." Meredith again paused. Linwood was still silent, and he went on to make the proposition authorized by Sir Henry, and which he enforced by arguments of policy so artfully and plausibly urged, that an older and sterner casuist than our friend Herbert might have been puzzled, if not tempted. But "it was a joyous sight to see" how he brushed away the web that was spun about him. He opened the door that communicated with the adjoining apartment, and the generous blood mounting to his

cheeks, "Do you see that young man?" he asked, in a low but energetic voice, and pointing to a youth who, pale and haggard, was stretched on the floor in one corner, wrapped in his camp-cloak, eating a crust of mouldy bread; "he is from Carolina, and as bold and generous a soldier as ever shouldered a musket. He and his two brothers joined the American army and came to the north—by the way, Jasper, please mark how the scattered and distant members of our vast country are drawn and bound together by one sentiment—we fight for Carolina, and Carolina fights for us. This poor fellow is the survivor of his two brothers—they fell in battle. His widowed mother lives on a small plantation. Her slaves have been decoyed away by the offer of freedom from your British officers—generous, forsooth! and she is left with one son. Yesterday this young man contrived to get a letter forwarded, entreating his mother to give up this son to her country. Look at that man with the frame of a Hercules, his joints loosened, and staggering as he crawls about from the effects of starvation, and the cursed fetid atmosphere of this hole! He is a Connecticut farmer, who began his career at Bunker Hill. Think you he spends his time in bewailing unrequited services, and whining about continental money? No, but in stimulating the spirits of these poor fellows by visions of the future glory of their free and independent country. 'Never mind, boys,' he says

'let 'em burn our houses (his was burned at Fairfield), our children shall live in better, and shall tie the flag with thirteen stripes, and maybe more, to the mast-head of their own ships.' Jasper, there is not one of these most abused men whose heart does not beat true to his country—to die doing battle for her would be nothing; that is the common lot of a soldier—but they are pining, starving, dying by inches here, without one thought disloyal to her. And I," he continued, after reclosing the door, "am to be humbled and galled with offers that the most squalid wretch among them would spurn. Perhaps I deserve it; there was one moment—but one, thank God! when, tempted by more than all the gold and all the honour in the king's gift, I swerved. I was saved by a look from Isabella. Do you think I could ever meet that eye again after I had joined Sir Henry's *honourable* corps of *Reformees*. I am humble, and with reason, Heaven knows; but I do marvel, Jasper, that you could suggest dishonour to Isabella's brother."

"Pardon me, Mr. Linwood, we have different views of the honour of the course I proposed, which appears to me simply a return to your inalienable duty."

"We certainly have very different views, Jasper. You call those poor fellows out there rebels, I patriots. You think they deserve to be ground to the dust, I that they are infernally abused. You think Washington is cold, selfish, calculating, am-

bitious; and I believe that he is generous, disinterested, just, (thereby I suffer,) and humane I now him to be; for there is not a man within these walls, myself excepted, who has not received some intimation that he is remembered and cared for by his general. Now, with these *views*, I could as easily put on the poisoned tunic of Nessus as the uniform of the *Reformees*."

The young men were both awkwardly silent for a few moments. Meredith was discomfited and mortified. Linwood's vexation had effervesced in his long speech; to use a household simile, the scum had boiled over and left the liquor clear. "Hang it, Jasper," he resumed, in his natural good-humoured tone, "don't let's quarrel, though the more you will serve me the more I won't be served. We will agree to make over these contested topics to dame Posterity, who, instead of peering forward, as we must, into the dark future, has only to cast her eyes behind her to award an infallible decision. Fifty years hence, my dear fellow, would that we could be here to see it, New-York will still be, if you are right, a petty colonial station for British officers; if I am, the rich metropolis of an independent empire. But, *allons*—is there no news, no gossip, no agreeable scandal afloat?"

Meredith suddenly recollected and communicated the arrival of his mother and Lady Anne Seton, and the propriety of hastening to receive them. Linwood heartily congratulated him, little

thinking how deeply his own fate was involved in this arrival.

Meredith went to play his filial part, and Herbert was left to solitary but not sad reflection. He felt a most comfortable, and perhaps unexpected assurance, that his virtues were purified and strengthened in the fires of adversity.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"She, the fair sun of all her sex
Has bless'd my glorious day;
And shall a glimmering planet fix
My worship to its ray?"—BURNS.

MEREDITH, after leaving the Provost, was hastening down Broad-street, when he perceived a carriage approaching him. At this moment a band of black musicians, who were in training, bearing the British flag, turned from Beaver into Broad-street; and as they turned, struck up a march in the faces of the horses. The suddenness of the apparition and the clamour terrified them, they reared and plunged. A lady screamed from the coach to the musicians to stop; but the souls of the Africans were lapt in the elysium of their own music, and they neither heard nor heeded till Meredith, springing forward, dashed the instrument of their leader to the ground. The music then ceased, and the coachman, by great adroitness or strength, or both, checked the progress of his steeds, while two ladies sprang from the coach, and were followed by shrieking waiting-maids and broken bandboxes, with their contents of feathers,

flowers, ribands, fans, &c., showering over the pavement.

The elder of the two ladies looked as if she could have lifted up her hands and wept; the younger did lift up hers and laugh. "Make haste, Nancy," said the elder; "oh, the coloured hair-powders—shut up the box, they are all blowing away—we can get none here."

"*Dépêchez vous, Therése,*" cried the young lady; "*oh, mes fleurs—mes plumes!*"

"*Ah, oui, mon Dieu! qu'est ce que c'est qu'une demoiselle sans plumes, sans fleurs!*" replied the little trig Française, fluttering hither and yon to reclaim her treasures from the dispersing winds.

"My dear mother!" exclaimed a voice, that for a moment silenced the chattering, and called forth a parenthetical and *sotto-voce* exclamation from Thérése—"*Ah, le fils de madame—un bel homme!*"

While the usual expressions of a joyful meeting were interchanging, Mrs. Linwood, who from her window had watched the affair to its *dénouement*, appeared at her door, calling "Jasper, bring the ladies here, I entreat you. My dear Mrs. Meredith, I am so sorry you have had such a fright, and yet so very glad to see you."

"For the love of Heaven, who is she?" asked Mrs. Meredith, so averting her face as to limit her query to her son.

"Mrs. Linwood."

A shadow passed over Mrs. Meredith's face;

but she instantly replied, " My dear Mrs. Linwood, how very happy I am to see you again—an awkward *début*, this," shrugging her shoulders; " but so fortunate it should have happened at your door; that the first house my foot enters in America should be that of a friend."

" A friend! Mrs. Linwood! strange, I never heard my aunt mention the name," thought Lady Anne.

" Lady Anne Seton," continued Mrs. Meredith, presenting her niece; " and how is the dear husband? and Herbert, my harem-scarem little friend, as I used to call him? Miss Belle—ah, ten years make such changes—' the boy and girl to man and woman grown;' and yourself—upon my word, Mrs. Linwood, the ten years have slipped by without touching you."

" Aunt forgets she did not recognise her," thought Lady Anne; and she conveyed her observation of the discrepancy by such an arch glance at her aunt, that she checked the flood-tide of her civilities, and gave Mrs. Linwood, who was nearly overpowered by them, time to rally. She, good woman, received them all literally; and, in return, furnished the most circumstantial details of her husband's late illness, told when he took physic and when he did not; when his laudanum made him sleep and when it would not—to all of which Mrs. Meredith " lent the pitying ear" of a thoroughbred lady, while she was mentally wondering the

woman could be such a fool as to think she cared whether her husband were dead or alive. After having threaded the mazes of the materia medica, Mrs. Linwood concluded with, "Bless me! I have not sent for Isabella!" The good lady trusted she had given Isabella time to make her toilet. Mrs. Linwood's artifices were very pardonable, and never exceeded some trifling manœuvre to keep the best foot forward without apparent limping. She rung the bell;—no one answered. "Jasper, will you have the goodness," she said, "to tap at her father's door, and let Belle know who is here—you see Jasper is quite one of us, Mrs. Meredith."

A more acute observer than Mrs. Linwood would have understood the lowering of Mrs. Meredith's brow as her eye followed her son. "Jasper has been fortunate, indeed, in making such friends," she said; "a great security is it, my dear Mrs. Linwood, for a young man to have domestic influences, and *such* influences."

On opening Mr. Linwood's door, Meredith found Isabella apparently absorbed in reading a political pamphlet to her father. "Ah, Jasper, I'm glad to see you!" cried out Mr. Linwood: "I give you joy. I have been trying, ever since I heard your mother was below, to drive this girl down; but she sticks to me like the breath of my nostrils. Now Jasper has come for you, you *must* go, Belle."

"Not *must*, sir, unless Miss Linwood prefers to do so."

"Did you come for me—I mean, did my mother send for me?"

"Do not go down if it is disagreeable to you," said Meredith, replying to rather more than met the ear.

"Pshaw! go Belle; your dress is well enough; the ladies—no disrespect, Jasper, it's the nature of the animal—will like you all the better for being worse dressed than themselves."

Isabella was not sorry to have her reluctance as cribed to her dishabille; but that, though she had some womanish feeling about it, constituted a very small portion of her shrinking from a presentation to Jasper's mother and fair cousin. She had, however, enough self-control to do well whatever must be done; and without farther hesitation she gave her arm to Meredith. As soon as her father's door was closed after them, he paused. He was intensely anxious to intimate to his mother, at their first meeting, the relation that he believed would subsist between them; but while he hesitated how to word this wish, Isabella prevented him.

"You have seen Herbert?"

"Yes."

"And the result?" she added, with a quivering lip.

"Precisely as you wished."

"Dear, dear Herbert!" she exclaimed, and sprang forward with a lightened heart and buoyant step. The first flush of elevated and gratified

feeling beamed from her soul-lit eye and died her cheek.

The light within shone on all without her. Her personal anxieties were forgotten; and to her natural elegance of manner there was a graciousness and brightness that made her at once shine forth as the sun of the little circle. Mrs. Meredith had proposed to herself to be condescending to Miss Linwood; and was quite sure that Lady Anne, whom she had induced, with an eye to a first impression on Jasper, to array herself before leaving the ship in a French walking-dress, would be *frappante*. But both ladies were destined to feel in Isabella's presence that they were lesser lights. Her simple morning-dress, and the classic arrangement of her dark rich hair, unspoiled and untouched by the profane fashion of the times, contrasted most favourably with the forced, prim, and fantastical mode of the day.

Mrs. Meredith was as near being astounded as a woman of the world ever can be, and was actually embarrassed and uncomfortable; but Lady Anne, though surprised, was charmed. For a moment she might have felt overshadowed; but nothing could, for more than one moment, cloud her sunny self-complacency. "*Qu'elle a l'air noble!*" she whispered to her cousin—"She has been abroad?—in France?"

"No," he replied; "but undisputed superiority anywhere is apt to produce '*l'air noble.*' Mere-

dith was not a man of independent opinions; and he had never felt a more assured admiration of Isabella than now, that he witnessed her impression on his reluctant and lady-of-the-world mother, and his *à-la-mode* cousin

"You find Isabella grown?" said Mrs. Linwood, expecting to elicit a flood of compliments.

"Oh, certainly," replied Mrs. Meredith, "very much grown: ten years, you know, makes a vast difference. Miss Linwood was not, I believe, much over twelve when I went home."

"Ten—twelve—twenty-two—bless me! no, dear Mrs. Meredith, she is not yet quite twenty," said the simple mother, as eagerly as if she were putting in the plea "not guilty."

"Scarcely three years older than my niece," replied Mrs. Meredith, with an evident satisfaction in the three years minus.

"And what are three years?" exclaimed Lady Anne; "they shall make no gulf between us, Miss Linwood—we will be friends at once—intimate—will we not?"

"You are very kind."

"Oh, not in the least. It will be quite as much my gain as yours. Aunt has brought me out to make my *début* here; and half the pleasure I think must consist in having a friend—a confidante, to talk over one's conquests with."

"Lady Anne, my love, you are so elated by getting out of that odious ship, that you hardly know what you are talking about."

"I beg your pardon, aunt, I do. I was talking on the most enchanting subjects: lovers, conquests, and confidantes."

"And what do you know about lovers and confidantes, my dear child? They are the unknown inhabitants of a *terra incognita* to you."

"My veteran mother," thought Meredith, "would fain shelter my pretty cousin with the *ægis* of simplicity." But simplicity was not in the *rôle* of the young lady. "*Mille pardons, chere tante,*" she replied—"have you not for the last twelve months been teaching me the geography of this unknown world?—and, besides, what think you we read of, talk of, dream of at boarding-school—history?—Greeks and Romans?—no, no, dear lady: young lords and nice officers in scarlet coats and epaulettes, and, now and then, *par parenthése—un beau cousin.*" A bright glance at Jasper with these last words propitiated his mother, and Lady Anne was permitted to proceed. "I take it for granted, Miss Linwood, that New-York is quite a paradise just now?"

"If 'nice young officers' are the birds of your paradise, Lady Anne, it is."

"The *beau cousin* might perhaps be admitted into yours," retorted the young lady, archly looking at Isabella for the blush she expected to provoke; but the blush called for came not to Isabella Linwood's cheek.

Mrs. Meredith explored another face. Jasper's

brilliant eyes impulsively turned towards Isabella, and there came a revelation from them that she would not admit, and yet could not misunderstand. "My dear son," said she, "I must trouble you to order a carriage for us. I am quite forgetting myself in the happiness of meeting an old friend."

Mrs. Linwood interposed. The time had not yet passed away when such primitive hospitalities were frankly offered and unceremoniously accepted, and she insisted on her friends staying to pass the day. Mrs. Meredith declined as resolutely as courtesy would permit; but Lady Anne, independent in all her proceedings, expressed so strong an inclination to remain, and brushed away her aunt's objections with such evident and relentless assurance of their flimsiness, that Mrs. Meredith was reduced, as a last resource, to yielding with grace.

The day, on many accounts, was oppressive to Isabella. Her sisterly thoughts were much with Herbert; she was anxious for his future, and in imagination painfully contrasted his solitary prison with the seeming cheerfulness of his father's house. There was something in Meredith's manner that offended her. It was constrained and elaborate, and it was evident to her that he shunned disclosing their actual relations to his mother, and sheltered them from her penetration by appearing quite engrossed in playful devotion to his pretty cousin. She was annoyed with Mrs. Meredith's

hollow and emphasized superlatives. She bore a strong personal resemblance to her son. Isabella was now and then painfully startled by a corresponding mental resemblance, which affected her somewhat like those family likenesses where an ugly face, by a sort of travesty, brings into question the beauty of a more fortunate one. The qualities that were glaring and obtrusive in the mother, were in the son sheltered by a nicer tact, and a more acute perception of their effect on others. "But," Isabella asked herself, "were they less real or less hopeless?"

Isabella, in her turn, was the subject of passing speculation to Mrs. Meredith. At first, when she appeared all radiant with animation, the sagacious lady concluded that she had taxed all her powers to take the heart of Jasper's mother by a *coup-de-théatre;* but afterward she could find no satisfactory solution to Isabella's abstractedness and apparent carelessness whether she pleased her or not. Nothing is so incomprehensible to a mere worldly spirit, spell-bound within a narrow circle of selfish interests, as the workings of an independent, lofty mind.

Isabella's sole enjoyment that day was from a source whence it would be least expected—from her probable rival—from the light-hearted, good-humoured Lady Anne; and before they parted they had made fair progress towards an intimacy.

The intimacies that occur between persons of

powerful and inferior character, probably result from the same necessity of the mind that drives a statesman to relaxation over a senseless game of cards, or (if, as with Edmund Burke, his heart overflows with the milk of human kindness) leads him to play at leap-frog with children. The same principle may furnish a solution for some puzzling disparities in matrimonial alliances.

"And what sort of a person is this Lady Anne?" asked Mr. Linwood of his daughter, who had been giving him such particulars of the day as she thought might entertain him.

"Very pretty, and graceful, and agreeable too. I am sure you will like her, papa. It is amusing to see how she goes straight forward to her point, like a bird by an air line, while her aunt winds about as if she were manœuvring a ship into port in presence of an enemy; oh, above all things, I like truth, straight-forwardness. Lady Anne is not brilliant, nor has she, I imagine, great depth of feeling; but she is independent, true, and kind-hearted, and in such good-humour with herself that she makes small demands on others—I like her."

"And do not fear her, Belle?"

Isabella answered to her father's probing glance proudly. "Fear her!—no, sir—no," she reiterated, but in a less assured tone.

"Bravo, my girl! but depend on't she will be a star in our firmament, this Lady Anne. What a

match she would have been for Herbert—obstinate, foolish, dear boy."

"Thank you for that, papa! he is dear and noble, and like his father in clinging to what he believes to be right."

"That is like me," replied Mr. Linwood, wiping the mist from his eyes; "but not like me, Belle, not at all like me, in mistaking wrong for right."

Strangely is the human mind compounded. Mr. Linwood had been informed of Herbert's rejection of Sir Henry Clinton's proffer. This bona fide intimation of the resemblance Herbert had manifested to his father in this rejection, placed the action in a fresh and favourable aspect. Vanity has its uses.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Come può ritrarre il piede
Inesperto pellegrino
Dagli Inciampi che non vede,
Dai Perigli che non sa?"—METASTASIO.

It was long before the dawn of one of the few soft days of October, 1779, that Bessie Lee left her safe home to begin a perilous journey. The light of reason was not quite extinct, and with some forecast she took a few coins, keepsakes, that had long lain idly in a drawer, and transferred them to her pocket; then placing in her bosom the little ivory box containing, as she wildly fancied, the charms that bound her to Jasper Meredith, she equipped herself for her journey. A regard to dress is an innate idea in woman that no philosopher can deny to the sex. In all her mutations, that remains.

The resemblance of the dress of an insane person to the ill-sorted and imperfect equipment in a dream, verifies Rush's remark, that derangement is a long dream—a dream a short derangement. Bessie, after looking over her moderate wardrobe, selected the only gala dress it contained—a white silk petticoat and blue bodice; but after dressing

herself in them, either from the instinct of neatness or from the glimmering of the unfitness of such travelling apparel, she took off the silk petticoat, and after tying it in a handkerchief with some more essential articles, she laced the bodice over a dimity skirt, and put over that a long linen nightgown. Delighted with her own provident sagacity in arraying herself for day and night, she threw over the whole a brown silk cardinal, and a chip gipsy hat tied down with a blue gauze handkerchief. "He always told me I had inspiration in dress," she said, as she gave a pleased, parting glance at the glass. In passing her mother's door, she paused: "I have heard it was a bad sign," thought she, "to leave home without your parent's blessing, but I go forth with Heaven's, and hers must follow." She then proceeded to equip her horse, and set out on the New-York road, which she pursued unerringly. She fancied that the same providential exemption from the necessity of sustenance vouchsafed to her was extended to her horse Steady, and the animal, happening to be full-fed, sturdy and of hardworking habits seemed to acquiesce in his supposed destiny, save now and then, when he resolutely halted at a stream of water to slake his thirst. The part of New-England through which Bessie's route lay was steril and sparsely settled. She was unmolested, and for the most part unobserved. She would sometimes pass a house where the children would pause from their

play, stare, and ask, one of the other, who that pretty lady could be? and wonder, that with such a nice cloak, she should ride without gloves! Once a kind-hearted farmer stopped her, and after asking her numberless questions to which he received no satisfactory replies, he earnestly begged her to stop at his house for some refreshment. She declined his hospitality with an assurance that she did not need it, and a smile that so little harmonized with her blanched cheek, and wild and melancholy eye, that the good man said her looks haunted him. In truth, so unearthly was her appearance, that two gossips, whom she passed on the road, stopped, drew nearer to each other, and without speaking, gazed after her till she was out of sight; and then, with feminine particularity, compared their observations.

"She's master beautiful!" exclaimed one of them.

"Call you that beautiful!" replied her companion, "why, she has neither flesh nor blood—I felt a chill when I looked at her."

"And I felt my blood rush to my heart, as if I had seen something out of nature. I might have taken her for an angel but for her silk cardinal, and her horse, that looked more like our old roan than like the horses in Revelations."

Nancy was less imaginative. "I did not see nothing mysterious," she said, "but her pale little

hands, that looked as if they could hardly hold a thread of silk."

"My! did not you see those long curls that streamed down below the hood of her cloak, looking as bright and soft as Judith's baby when we laid it out—poor thing! and the colour of her cheeks, that were as white as my poor man's fresh tombstone—and her eyes, that shone like stars of a frosty night! don't tell me, Nancy! we must expect to see visions, and dream dreams when there's war in the land and famine at the door!" The unconscious subject of this colloquy went on, her innocent heart dilating with a hope as assured and buoyant as that of a penitent on her way to a shrine where absolution and peace await her.

It was late in the afternoon when, emerging from a wood, she observed that at a short distance before her the road forked. She was hesitating which direction to take, when seeing two men seated on a log by the fence, she reined her horse towards them. They were soldiers returning from service, who had deposed their knapsacks and halted to refresh themselves with some coarse food, which was spread on the ground. Bessie was close upon them, and had stopped her horse, when their broad insolent stare awakened her timidity, and she was turning away when one of them seized her bridle, exclaiming, "Not so fast, my pretty mistress! first thoughts are best; what did you come here for?"

"Oh!" she answered confused and stammer-

ing, "I—I—I do not know—I came for—for—nothing."

"Then don't be scared—for nothing can come of nothing—(a rare sight, a petticoat, hey, Mart?)—come, dismount, lady fair."

Bessie seemed paralyzed. Mart's face expressed an emotion of compassion—"I say, Raphe," he interposed, "be civil; let her go on."

"I mean to be civil, you sir; don't you see her horse is half starved" (the poor beast was eagerly cropping the grass), "and she looks as if she had not tasted victuals for a month—come, come, little one, what are you 'fraid of?" and slipping her foot from the stirrup, he lifted her from the saddle and seated her on the log. He then took up the blue check handkerchief on which their repast (coarse brown bread, slices of raw pork, and apples) was spread; "come, take some and eat away," he continued, "that's a nice girl!" Bessie, the delicate, shrinking Bessie, seized the food thus offered and thus served, and ate ravenously. In her disordered state she seemed to exist in two separate natures; the mind took no cognizance of the necessities or sensations of the body, and the body, at the first opportunity, asserted and gratified its cravings. While she ate, the men talked apart. "This is droll, by jiminy!" said Mart, "who or what do you guess she is, Raphe?"

"Some stray cast-off of some of the old country folks—German gin'rals or English lords."

"She don't look like it," said Mart, after having cast at Bessie a surveying glance, in which pity was mingled with curiosity.

"Don't look like it! you can't tell what she does look like—she's worried, and pale, and scared out of her wits—but I tell you what does look like it—do you see that fandango finery (Bessie's blue bodice) peeping out of the neck of her gown! By the living jingo, she eats like a Trojan, don't she? This way she'll soon get the blood back to her pretty cheeks. But I say, Mart, we must make some sort of a calculation what to do—"

"What to do—that's plain enough, let her go her way, and we'll go ours."

"You're a fool, Mart, and t'ant the first time I've thought so."

"And you're a rogue, Raphe, nor is it the first time I've thought so."

Raphe's angry blood mounted to his cheeks, but well aware this was not the moment for a broil, he gulped down his passion, and resumed in a more conciliating tone. "There's no use in falling out, Mart; we've had lean *fortin* long enough, and when a streak of fat comes, I don't see no reason in turning our plates bottom side upwards—do you?"

"No."

"It's plaguy tedious walking barefoot," he looked significantly at the horse; "there's a hundred long miles to foot it before I see home."

"And a hundred and fifty to boot, before I see the top of our steeple."

"Then I conclude 'twould be an accommodation to you, as well as to me, to ride and tie that stout beast?"

"And she?" said Mart, interrogatively, and pointing to Bessie.

"Why, she—she's as light as a feather; she can ride behind while she behaves and holds her tongue, and we find it convenient; the like of her can't expect to pick and choose."

"You're a d—d rascal, Raphe!" This exclamation spoken with energy and in a louder voice than the previous conversation, roused Bessie's attention, and she listened to and comprehended what followed. "I'm going home, to our folks," continued Mart, "and do you think I could look mammy in the face after such a trick as that?"

"Well, well, man—don't be mad; if one shoe don't fit, another may. Supposing we just slip into this wood with this traveller, just so far that she can't rouse people on the high road here with crying 'stop thief,' and then we'll be off on the beast, that, on my conscience, I believe is no more hers than ours." Before the sentence was finished, Bessie had sprung into her saddle. Raphe, whose fierce passions had been kept in abeyance by the necessity of his companion's co-operation, now sprang forward and seized her bridle. "Oh, mercy! mercy!" cried the terrified girl.

A blow from Mart's fist on his side obliged Raphe to turn and defend himself; and Bessie, thus released, urged her horse onward, leaving her champion to do battle in her righteous cause, which he did so manfully and thoroughly that Raphe was disabled for the present, and left to curse his own folly and to pursue his pedestrian journey alone.

Bessie's horse fortunately selected the right road; and refreshed by his half hour's rest, he obeyed his mistress' signals to hasten onward. These signals she reiterated from an impression of some indefinite danger pursuing her. By degrees, however, her thoughts reverted to their former channels, and she dwelt no more on her recent alarm than a dreamer does on an escaped precipice. A languor stole over her that prevented her from observing Steady's motions. From a fast trot he had slackened to a walk, and after thus creeping on for a mile or two, he stood stock still.

Bessie sat for a while as if waiting his pleasure, and then looking at the setting sun, she said, "Well, Steady, you have done your day's duty, and I'll not be unmerciful to you. I too have a tired feeling," and she passed her hand over her throbbing temples; "but, Steady, we will not stay here by the roadside, for I think there be bad people on this road, and besides, it is better to be alone where only God is."

The country through which Bessie was now passing was rocky, hilly, and wooded, excepting

narrow intervals and some few cleared and cultivated slopes. She had just passed a brook, that glided quietly through a very green little meadow on her left, but which on her right, though screened from sight, sounded its approach as in the glad spirit of its young life it came leaping and dancing down a rocky gorge. Bessie, as it would seem, from the instinct of humanity, let down some bars to allow her hungry steed admittance to the meadow, saying as she did so, "You shall have the green pastures and still waters, Steady, where those home-looking willows are turning up their silvery leaves as if to kiss the parting sunbeams, and the sunflower and the golden-rod are still flaunting in their pride—poor things! but I will go on the other side, where the trees stand bravely up, to screen and guard me—and the waterfall will sing me to sleep."

She crossed the road and plunged into the wood, and without even a footpath to guide her, she scrambled along the irregular margin of the brook; sometimes she swung herself round the trunk of a tree by grasping the tough vines encircling it; sometimes, when a bald perpendicular rock projected over the water, she surmounted it as if the danger of wetting her feet must be avoided at all pains and risks; then, a moss covered rock imbedded in the stream attracting her eye, she would spring on to it, drop her feet into the water, doff her little chip hat, and bathe her burning temples in the cool stream: and when she again raised her

head, shook back her curls and turned her face heavenward, her eye glowing with preternatural brightness, she might have been mistaken for a wanderer from the celestial sphere gazing homeward. After ascending the stream for about a hundred yards, she came to a spot which seemed to her excited imagination to have been most graced

> "By the sovereign planter when he formed
> All things for man's delightful use;"

and, in truth, it was a *resting-place* for the troubled spirit, far more difficult to find than a bed of down for the wearied body.

The thicket here expanded and spread its encircling arms around a basin worn into the earth by the force of the stream, which leaped into it over a rock some thirty feet in height. Here and there a rill straggled away from the slender column of water, and as it caught the sun's slant ray, dropped down the rock in sparkling gems. The trees were wreathed with grape-vines, whose clusters peeped through the brown leaves into the mirror below. The leaves of the topmost branches of the trees were touched with the hues of autumn, and hung over the verdant tresses below them like a wreath of gorgeous flowers. The sky was clear, and the last rays of the setting sun stole in obliquely, sweet and sad, as the parting smile of a friend, glancing along the stems of the trees and flashing athwart the waterfall.

"Here will I lay me down and rest," said Bessie, rolling up with her foot a pillow of crisp crimson leaves, that had fallen from a young delicate tree, fit emblem of herself, stricken by the first touch of adversity. "But first I will say my prayers, for I think this is one of God's temples." She knelt and murmured forth the broken aspirations of her pure heart, and then laying herself down, she said, "I wish mother and Eliot could see me now—they would be so satisfied!"

Once she raised her head, gazed at the soft mist that was curling up from the water, and seemed intently listening. "I have somewhere read," she said, that

> "'Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.'

I believe it!" again her head fell back on its sylvan pillow, and utterly incapable of farther motion or thought, she sank to deep repose. Night came on, the watchful stars shone down upon her, the planets performed their nightly course, the moon rose and set, and still the unconscious sufferer slept on.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Alas! what poor ability's in me
To do him good!
Assay the power you have."—*Measure for Measure.*

"Ah, Belle, is that you?" said Mrs. Archer, as Miss Linwood just at twilight stole into her aunt's room to have a *tête-à-tête* with the only person in the world with whom she had a strictly confidential intimacy. "What is Sir Henry's answer?"

"Just such as we might have expected. He does, to be sure, in good set terms, beg me to have no apprehensions about my brother. But he says it is impossible for him just now to grant me an opportunity to speak to him in private on the subject: 'it would be quite useless,' and 'he's particularly occupied,' and all such trumpery excuses."

"Then take my advice, Belle, and make the opportunity he will not grant:—go to his ball this evening. Never mind the gossip of kind friends, who will wonder you can have the heart to appear there when your brother is in such unfortunate circumstances. You and I agree in the principle of never sacrificing the greater to the less—go, Sir Henry will not refuse you his ear when you are before him; and if you cannot obtain all you

desire, you may get some mitigation of poor Herbert's condition."

"I have made up my mind—I will go."

"You will meet Lady Anne Seton? The ball is given in honour of her arrival, I hear."

"Yes."

"You are very pensive and *monosyllabic*, Belle; has any thing occurred? Have you seen Jasper since that last critical conjuncture in your affairs?"

"No—oh, yes, he has called two or three times with Lady Anne."

"Then something has *not* occurred, which amounts to pretty much the same thing; or, perhaps, my dear child, you are beginning to feel a little tremulous about this pretty and rich cousin?"

"No, aunt, I assure you that my first serious doubt on that subject would fix my wavering judgment."

"And your feelings?"

"They go in the same scale with my judgment. You know that I do not expect perfection. If ever I marry, which I think very doubtful—you may smile aunt Mary, but I think it more than doubtful—I shall expect faults in abundance. Heaven knows I am no match for perfection; I only ask that they may not be such faults as affect the vitality of the character."

"And you would cease to love, Isabella, where you suspected such?"

"If I merely suspected," replied Isabella, fal-

tering, "I cannot say; but if I were sure, most certainly."

"A suspicion of ten years standing is, I should think—" assurance doubly sure, she would have added; but wondering at the subtleties of that sentiment that could mystify the perceptions of the clear-sighted Isabella Linwood, she merely said, "it matters not what I think—you will both feel and act right; and if you ought to get rid of the shackles, you will not wait till they rust off."

Mrs. Archer had never interposed her advice in Isabella's affair with Meredith, though she watched its progress with far more interest than if it had been a disease that might issue in death. She thought it was a case where she must and would work out her own salvation; and where, at any rate, she must be left to the free decision of her own heart. Still she found it impossible in their confidential womanly intercourse not to betray her own biases; and whenever they were betrayed, Isabella felt them the more, as they produced the only discord in the perfect harmony of their minds. The souls of the aunt and niece seemed to be informed by the same spirit. They had the same independence of mind, the same acute perception of truth through all the adventitious circumstances and artificial forms of society, the same restiveness under the everlasting trifling of frivolous minds, the same kindling at what was beautiful in thought, and the same enthusiasm for the beautiful in action.

After Mrs. Archer's last words to her, Isabella sat thoughtful and silent, till her aunt reminded her that it was quite time she should go home and dress for Sir Henry's ball.

"I will go," she replied, "though there is nothing in life I detest quite so much as playing suitor to a great man."

"Then, my dear child, you had best come on *our side*, for as long as we are colonists and wear the yoke, sueing and obsequiousness is the necessity of our condition."

"You would take advantage of my pride to make me a republican. The very first rebel, if I remember me, was he who 'could not bow and sue for grace with suppliant knee.'"

"An arch rebel he was, but no republican; our champions are republicans, and no rebels, since they claim only their original and indefeasible rights. But here come Ned and Lizzy to assert theirs."

The children were attracted by Isabella's voice. Her hearty devotion to them made them regard her much in the light of the good genii of an eastern tale, who never appears without conferring some signal happiness. "Tell me, Ned," said she, "are you whig or tory?"

"I used to be a tory, cousin Belle, because you were, and I thought mamma was."

"And now?"

"I'm for Washington; but don't you tell," he replied, kissing her.

"And you, Lizzy, do you know what whig and tory means?"

"To be sure: I know whig means the very best man in the world, and that is Captain Lee; and I shall always love the whigs best—"

"And I begin to love their cause best, too, my dear children; and with this parting confession, which pray keep to yourselves, good-bye to you all."

Mrs. Archer hailed the change of Isabella's sentiments (a woman's political conclusions are rather sentiments than opinions) as a good omen. It was a link broken in the chain that bound her to Meredith; and it indicated, as she thought, the weakness of the whole chain. She thus concluded a long revery: "Belle thinks and feels independently. No woman in the unimpaired perfection and intensity of love does this. Milton understood our nature when he put those words of dependance and tenderness into Eve's mouth:

> "'God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more,
> Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.'"

The gala days of Sir Henry Clinton's reign in New-York are still celebrated in traditionary fireside-stories, as a brilliant period in the colonial *beau-monde*. However unsuited to the times, the exiled whigs, who were driven forth from their homes, might have deemed this pomp, pageantry,

feasting, and revelry; however much it might have exasperated the Americans, who, half-starved and half-clothed, were contending for their rights, it served to kill the ennui of foreign officers, to bring *en scene* the pretty candidates for husbands, and, in short, to do what is done for us by the balls and company (society?) of our own gay seasons. Never, according to the grandmammas, was there such abundance of the elements of a belle's happiness—such music!—such dresses!—so many, and such admirers!

"My dear Jasper," said Mrs. Meredith, while Lady Anne, in Sir Henry's antichamber, was telling a bevy of admiring young ladies that her French milliner had fashioned her dress after one of Maria Antoinette's, "my dear Jasper, is not your cousin looking perfectly lovely this evening?"

"For the first time I think her beautiful."

"She is beautiful!—Colonel Davidson says she is by far the prettiest woman on this side the Atlantic." The lady paused; and then, being in her arguments, what is called an authority lawyer, proceeded. "Sir Edward remarked, as he handed me up-stairs, how superior her air is to that of the young women here; indeed, how should they have an air, poor things, in this demi-savage world?"

Meredith could not but smile as he compared his cousin to that model of elegance enthroned in his mind. He coolly replied, "Lady Anne is easy."

"Easy!—bless me, Jasper, Helen Ruthven is what I call easy; and a very engaging girl is she—but Lady Anne! Sir Henry himself remarked her grace, her faultless proportions. There is that troublesome St. Clair peering through the door; he means to ask her for the first dance—pray anticipate him, Jasper: it is her *début;* you will oblige me infinitely, my son."

"What are you and aunt caballing about?" asked Lady Anne, approaching.

"Conspiring against the world, fair cousin. I am entreating my mother to interpose her authority, and command you to lead down the first dance with me."

"Her authority! I cannot dance with a collar round my neck. If you wish it, authority out of the question, I will dance with you with all my heart. Of course you know, cousin Jasper," she added, as at the striking up of the music Meredith led her into the dancing-room, "I prefer you to a tiresome stranger."

"You flatter me!"

"No, indeed," replied the young lady, without perceiving that Meredith was piqued by her unvarnished truth, "I never flatter: one gets so tired of flattery, that hears nothing else all day from her admirer down to her dressing-maid. I never should flatter where I particularly wished to please."

Meredith was always inferring a little more than met the ear, winding in a labyrinthian path where

he was not like to meet one who, like his literal cousin, went straight-forward. "Ah, my pretty coz, are you there?" thought he. "You would have me understand that though you do not wear my mother's collar, you are well enough inclined to go where she would guide you."

Lady Anne took the station assigned her in the dance by the ritual of precedence; but as soon as she moved, it was plain that, whatever rank was assigned her, nature and art had decreed she should there be first. Those who went before her through the mazes of the long dance, sighed, panted, and puffed to the imminent risk of breaking the bounds of their whalebone prisons, or sinking under their brocades. She, in a dress that for lightness and grace would have suited an Ariel or a Persian dancing-girl, moved like a bird through its own element. There was no sign of effort or fatigue. Her eyes, instead of being set by overpowering exertion, or wandering like an ambitious performer's, sparkled with animation, and her coral lips parted in a child-like smile. She seemed to have surrendered herself to the music, and to be a poetic manifestation of the pleasure of motion. The observers followed her to the foot of the dance: the dancers became mere observers.

Lady Anne received this tribute as a matter of course, and if she were not surprised, she was not elated by it. Not so Mrs. Meredith; she enjoyed it as a triumph. She had anticipated the

sensation to be produced on the assembly, and had made a pretty accurate estimate of that which, by a very natural reaction, would be felt by Meredith; and when, stationed near them, she heard the eloquent flood of compliments he poured out,—heard him, this time unbidden, earnestly beg his cousin's hand for another dance, she turned away satisfied that the first step was taken.

Every one present who might aspire to such distinction, asked Lady Anne's hand, and each solicitation enriched the prize to Meredith, for (if it be allowed thus to speak of such high concernments), he graduated even ladies' favours by their market value.

Miss Ruthven had not been dancing herself; she was conscious of not dancing well; but hovering about the dance, and expressing, whenever she caught Meredith's eye, by animated gestures and significant glances, her admiration of his partner. At the first opportunity she said to Lady Anne, in a low voice, but not too low to be heard by Meredith,—"How very glad I am that my dear friend, Isabella Linwood, is not here."

"And how very sorry I am!—but pray, Miss Ruthven, why are you glad?"

"Oh, you know—you faultless creature, I am sure you know."

"Indeed, I cannot conjecture."

"Then, if I must tell, one does not like to see one's friends outshone. Isabella Linwood has so

long been the brightest star in our firmament. Ah, Mr. Meredith, *sic transit!*—as you learned in the tongues say."

Meredith made no reply, for at this moment he caught Isabella's eye as she entered the room, leaning on Sir Henry's arm. She was dressed in a white silk gown, without any ornament or decoration whatever, save a rich Brussels lace veil, which she had put on partly to screen and partly to apologize for her very simple and rather inappropriate toilet.

"*Ah, console te mon amie!*" exclaimed Lady Anne, touching Miss Ruthven's arm with her fan, "look at that peerless creature, and tell me now whose light will wax dim. I like my own looks as well, I am sure, as anybody else likes them, but I can see that I am quite *une chose terrestre* compared with Isabella Linwood—*n'est ce pas mon cousin.*"

"*Les choses terrestres* are best adapted to the sphere for which they are created," said Meredith, turning, with a bitter smile, from what he thought a very cold salutation from Miss Linwood, to begin the second dance with Lady Anne.

Isabella stood for a moment with the rest, admiring and wondering at Lady Anne's performance; then, intent on the object which alone brought her to Sir Henry's, she begged five minutes' audience in the library. "There she goes," thought Mrs. Meredith, taking a long breath, as if relieved

from a load, "I knew it would make her very uncomfortable."

"Ah," thought Meredith, as following Isabella with his eyes he blundered in the dance—"there is something of the *terrestre* in that movement—I will profit by it."

"Quite as terrestrial as the rest of us," thought Helen Ruthven, and as she stationed herself next to Mrs. Meredith, and made some very acceptable remarks about Miss Linwood, she felt like a political manœuvrer, who having started rival candidates, flatters himself he shall run in to the goal between them.

"To what am I indebted for this grace, Miss Linwood," asked Sir Henry, rather to relieve Isabella than to inform himself of what he already anticipated.

"I am here a beggar, Sir Henry."

"In your brother's behalf?—I understand,—a very painful subject, my dear young lady,—I feel, on my honour I do, the deepest sympathy with your father. You are aware that I have done all in my power for the misguided young man, and that he has not accepted my overtures."

"And that his refusal is the warrant of his honour—is it not, Sir Henry."

"Why, there are many modifications of this principle of honour. You would not hold a thief bound by his oath to his comrades, if he were offered pardon and enrolment among honest men as his reward for abandoning them?"

An indignant reply rose to Isabella's lips, but she remembered in time that she came as a suitor, and saying that she would not waste Sir Henry's time with arguing on a subject on which they must utterly differ, she went straight to her point. "You must, sir," she said, "believe that my brother came to the city for the motive he avows, and for no other."

"What proof have I of this?" asked Sir Henry, with a tormenting smile.

"The word of a man of truth."

"And the faith of an all-believing girl. This may be very sufficient evidence in a *cour d'amour* —it would hardly suffice in a court-martial. But proceed, my dear Miss Linwood, and tell me precisely your wishes. You may rely on my desire to serve you."

Sir Henry's tone was earnest and sincere, and Isabella was encouraged. "My brother," she said, "has, thank Heaven, shown himself equal to bearing well the adverse turns of a soldier's fortune. He endures manfully his imprisonment in the dark, filthy, crowded prison allotted to the Americans— the honest yeomen of the land. He suffers, without complaint, Sir Henry, the petty tyranny of the atrocious keeper of these poor men."

"Tut, tut, my dear,—it is the fortune of war."

Isabella had again to quell her pride, before she could command her voice to proceed with due humility. "All he asks, Sir Henry, all that I ask

for him, is, that you will put him on the footing of a prisoner of war, and thus relieve him from an imputation that compels General Washington to withhold all interference in his behalf, and to leave him here a degraded man, suffering for an act of rashness what is alone due to crime."

"It is impossible, my dear girl—you overrate my powers—I am responsible—"

"To God—so are we all, Sir Henry, and happiest are those who have most of such deeds as I ask of you to present at his tribunal. But are you not supreme in these provinces? and may you not exercise mercy without fearing that man shall miscall it?"

"My powers, thanks to my gracious sovereign, are ample; but you have somewhat romantic notions of the mode of using them. I am willing to believe—or rather," he added with a gracious smile, "to believe that you believe your brother's story to be a true one; but, Miss Linwood, this view of the ground must not alter, to speak *en militaire*, our demonstration. We are bound, as I have communicated to you, through our friend Mr. Jasper Meredith—we are bound, by the policy of war, to avail ourselves of the accident, if it be one, that enables us plausibly to impute to Washington an act held dishonourable in all civilized warfare."

"Then, in plain English," said Isabella, with a burst of indignation this time irrepressible, "the

'policy of war' compels you to profess to believe a falsehood, in order to stain a spotless name."

Sir Henry made no reply, but strided with folded arms up and down the apartment. A glance at his irritated countenance recalled Isabella to herself. "Forgive me, Sir Henry," she said, if, feeling only that my poor brother is a victim to this horrible 'policy of war,' I have spoken more boldly than was fitting a humble, miserable suitor."

Whether it is that the tone of submission is that which Heaven has ordained for women, and that which is the natural vehicle of a lofty sense of superiority is a falsetto in which she rarely succeeds, we cannot say; but true it is, that the moment Isabella's voice faltered, Sir Henry's brow relaxed, and condescending to her weakness, he said, "It can hardly be expected, Miss Linwood, that a young lady should comprehend a subject quite out of her line—we will, therefore, if you please, waive its farther discussion, and return to the drawing-room."

"Excuse me, Sir Henry, I cannot go back to the drawing-room," replied Isabella, in spite of her efforts bursting into tears,—"I came here solely for the purpose of obtaining something for poor Herbert, and I have utterly failed." It is not in man—a gentleman and a soldier, to be unmoved by the tears, the real distress of a young and beautiful woman. Sir Henry too, to his friends—to those of his own household (we have it on poor Andre's testimony), was generous and kind hearted.

"My dear girl," he said, "pray do not make yourself so unhappy. You know not how much your brother is already indebted to you—if he were not fenced about by such friends, your father on one side, and yourself and your devoted knight on the other—do not blush, my dear young lady—he would have fared much worse than he has, I assure you. He has only to suffer durance with patience—our bark is worse than our bite, and, believe me, the war cannot last much longer."

"And he must remain in prison while the war lasts?"

"I fear so."

"Then, for mercys' sake, Sir Henry, grant us one favour. My father is old. His health and fortune, as you know, are shattered. This cruel war severed him from his only son, and drew down on poor Herbert the displeasure which has ended in all this wretchedness. Something may be saved from the wreck, their disjointed affections may be re-united if—if they are permitted to meet?"

"If your father wished to visit your brother, he would have asked permission—it certainly would not have been refused."

Isabella well knew that her father, after having once (to use his favourite phrase) set his foot down, would not make so violent a recession as such a step demanded; but not choosing to allude to his infirmities, and anxious to secure for Herbert a greater alleviation than a single interview, she availed herself of an obvious reason. "My father,"

she said, "is still confined to his apartment. He cannot go to Herbert—if Herbert might come to him?"

"This would be indeed an extraordinary departure from all form and precedence."

"Yes; but it would be the very essence of kindness, which is better than all form and precedence. Oh, Sir Henry, have you not sometimes sleepless hours in the silent watches of the night; and will not then the thought that you have solaced an old man, your friend, and restored peace and love to his habitation, be better than the memory of victories—dear Sir Henry, will it not?"

"I should be too happy to oblige you—it would be a very great pleasure; but indeed, indeed, my dear Miss Isabella, this is an extraordinary proposition."

"So much the better fitting you to accede to it; you who have the power to depart from the vulgar beaten track. You may have little reason to remember with pleasure this vexatious war, Sir Henry; but the good you have done by the way will be like the manna of the wilderness."

Isabella had touched the right cord. "Well, my dear Miss Belle, tell me precisely what you want, and what security you can give that my trust will not be abused."

"I want an order from you to Cunningham, directing him to permit my brother to leave the prison in the evening between any hours you shall

see fit to assign; and for your security, Sir Henry, I can offer the surest, the word not only of a man of honour, as you have said there are many and uncertain modifications of that principle, but the word of a man bound to you by every tie of gratitude and good faith."

"You have persuaded me, my dear, against my better reason, it may be, but you have persuaded me; and to-morrow, after our cabinet-council, I will send you the order."

"Oh, no—to-night, Sir Henry," urged Isabella, with her characteristic decision, determining to leave nothing to the possible influence of a cabinet-council or a treacherous to-morrow; "to-night, if you would make me completely happy. Here on the table is pen, ink, and paper; and here is a chair—sit down, and write three lines, and I will go home with them, and fall down on my knees, and pray God to bless you for ever and ever."

If Sir Henry had been told one hour before that he should be persuaded to such an act, he might have exclaimed with Hazael—"Am I a dog," that I should be thus *managed!* But, like many other great men, he yielded to a superior mind, albeit in the form of woman. He wrote the order, taking care to qualify it by requiring Cunningham to guard young Linwood's egress and ingress from observation, and stipulating that he should be attended by Cunningham himself, the most formidable of the bulldog race of jailers.

"Now," said Sir Henry, after Isabella, with a transport of gratitude, had received the order, and was about to take her leave, "you must not run away—you, of all others, are bound to grace a fête given to Jasper Meredith's cousin—you owe me this."

"And most gratefully will I pay you all I can of the debt I owe you, Sir Henry," she replied, giving him her hand, and returning to the drawing-room. The consciousness of the advantage she had gained, the buoyant spirit of youth, that having taken one step from the starting point believes the race won, lit up her eye and cheek with their natural brightness. If a mask had fallen from her face, the change would not have been more startling to some of her observers, nor more puzzling to others.

"I do marvel, cousin Jasper," said Lady Anne, when they were driving home, "that you have never fallen in love with Isabella Linwood!"

"And how do you know that I have not?" he asked, willing to try the ground of her conclusions.

"How! bless me, do you think I am stone-blind? —you have not danced with her—you have scarcely spoken to her this evening, when she appeared so perfectly irresistible."

"I fancy, my dear," interposed Mrs. Meredith, "that your cousin Jasper, like other men of his stamp, prefers a person less *prononcée*—more quiescent—more ductile than Miss Linwood."

"You mean, aunt, not shining with a light of her own—more of a reflector."

"Pardon me, my dear Lady Anne, you interrupted me. I was going on to say, that men who are conscious of eminent talents, prefer those who, not ambitious to shine, will amuse and sooth their hours of relaxation."

"Lesser lights—I understand you perfectly," said Lady Anne, cutting in to escape her aunt's tedious circumlocution: "do tell me, Jasper," she continued, "if you observed how changed Miss Linwood appeared when she returned to the drawing-room? I was dancing with that tiresome colonel, and you were talking to me."

"I was talking with you—how could I observe another?"

"Miss Linwood mistakes," said Mrs. Meredith, 'in assuming such violent contrasts—in making such sudden transits from grave to gay. He is a poor artist who resorts to glaring lights and deep shadows to set off his pictures—she wants *toning down*."

The mother was not more at fault in her expressed opinion, whether sincere or not, than her son was in his mental inference from the sudden change in Isabella's deportment. None are more fallible in their judgment than people of the world, and simply because they make no allowance for truth as a basis of action. Notwithstanding Meredith's disclaimer, he had observed, and narrowly,

the change so obvious, and thus had reasoned upon it:—"Isabella was piqued at my devotion to my cousin; she was, for no woman is above these little vanities, vexed at Lady Anne's superlative dancing; but she soon rallied, and determined to appear high as the stars above me, and all these matters. Her pride is invincible; it is quite time to show her that her power is not. Women *are* destined to be the 'lesser lights.' I have most generously committed myself, while she has remained as silent, if not as cold, as a statue; therefore I am at liberty to retreat, if I should—at any future time—choose to do so. When I am with her, I feel her full supremacy; but away from her, on reflection, I can perceive that an alliance with my cousin might, in the end, be quite—that is, very tolerable, and vastly more eligible (and in these times that must be thought of) than this long, long *dreamed* of marriage with Isabella Linwood."

CHAPTER XXVI.

"The wonder, or a woman keeps a secret."

Isabella moulded and arranged every thing to profit by Sir Henry's boon. She persuaded her father (one is easily led the way the heart inclines), in consideration of Herbert's past sufferings and uncertain future, to acquiesce in a present oblivion of his offences. She exacted a promise from Herbert that he would hear her father laud King George, his ministers, and all their acts, without interposing a disqualifying word, or even a glance; and, what was a greater feat for him, that he would sit quietly and hear the names of Washington, Franklin, Jay, Hamilton, La Fayette, all that he most honoured, coupled with the most offensive epithets. This vituperation she knew was a sort of safety-valve, by which her father let off the passion that might otherwise burst on poor Herbert's head. She felt that no sacrifice short of that of principle was too great to obtain affectionate intercourse between the father and son; that between those thus related, there never could be a "good war, nor a bad peace."

As Sir Henry had exacted a strict secrecy as to his indulgence, Isabella congratulated herself that

she had long before this persuaded her father to dismiss Jupiter (an irreclaimable gossip), on the ground that he was a useless piece of lumber; but really, because Rose had declared that it exceeded the ability of her commissary department to supply his rations. Rose herself was worthy of all confidence. Mrs. Archer, of course, was one of the family cabinet.

The awkwardness of the first meeting got over, all difficulties were past. Little differences, if *let alone*, soon melt away in the warmth of hearty affection. Herbert was obliged sometimes to bite his lips, and at others, when his frank and hasty spirit prompted a retort, a glance from Isabella kept him silent.

It was not till Herbert's second or third visit that Mr. Linwood manifested the uneasiness incident to persons of his age and habits when put out of their accustomed track. Rivington's Royal Gazette, issued twice a week, and the only newspaper in the city, was to Mr. Linwood, as newspapers are to most men, one of the necessaries of life. "My dear," he asked his wife, "where is the paper?"

"I left it below, my dear; there is nothing in it." Mrs. Linwood had ventured this omission from consideration to Herbert, whose temper she feared might boil over at the hearing of one of those high-toned tory gazettes.

"Pshaw—nothing in it! just so all women say, unless they find some trumpery murder or ship-

wreck. Belle, be good enough to bring the paper and read it to me; and do ask Rose to bring us in a stick of wood—it is as cold as Greenland here—five pounds I paid Morton yesterday for a cord of hickory. D—n the rebels, I wish I had their bones for firewood."

"They do their best, sir, to make it hot for the tories," said Herbert, very good-humouredly.

"Ah, Herbert, my son, I forgot you were here; I did indeed. But I can't be mealy-mouthed—I must speak out, come what come will. But 'tis hard not to be able to get the wood from our own farms, is it not?"

"Very hard, sir, to be deprived of any of our rights."

"Rights!" Isabella entered, and Mr. Linwood added in a softened tone, "Have a care, my boy; there are certain words that fall on my ear like sparks on gunpowder."

"Here is something to prevent your emitting any more sparks just now, Mr. Herbert," said Isabella, giving him a Boston paper, while she retained the orthodox journal to read aloud.

"What's that?—what's that?" asked her father.

"A Boston paper, sir, sent to you with Colonel Robertson's compliments."

Herbert read aloud a few lines written on the margin of the paper, chuckling in spite of his filial efforts to the contrary: "Major-general Putnam presents his compliments to Major-general

Robertson, and sends him some American newspapers for his perusal. When General Robertson shall have done with them, it is requested they be given to Rivington, in order that he may print some truth."

"The impudent renegado! Come, Isabella, what says Rivington to-day?"

Isabella read aloud an order from Sir Henry Clinton, "That all negroes taken fighting in the rebel cause should be sold as slaves: and that all deserting should live at what occupation they pleased within the British lines!"

"Very salutary that!" interposed Mr. Linwood. "Black sons of Belial—they fighting for liberty, d—n 'em!"

Herbert cleared his throat. "My father—my upright father applauding a bounty offered to cowardice and treachery!—Oh the moral perversions engendered by war!" thought Isabella; but she wisely kept her reflections to herself, and, striking another chord, ran over one of Rivington's advertisements of fancy articles for sale by himself, the sole editor and publisher in the city. Oh, Smetz, Stewart, Gardiner, Tryon, Bailly, ye ministers to the luxury of our city! well may ye exclaim, in your rich repositories of the arts and industry of the old world—

"Great streams from little fountains flow!"

For the curious in such matters, we permit our

heroine to read aloud verbatim: "For sale at this office, scarlet dress-frocks, with silk lining and capes, the work of celebrated operators west of London; the celebrated new-fashioned buckle, which owes its origin and vogue to the Count d'Artois, brother to the King of France; of the locket or depository for preserving the gentle Saccharissa's hair, a great variety; crow-quills for the delicate Constantia; scarlet riding-dresses for ladies, made to suit the uniform of their husbands or *lovers;* canes for the gallant gay Lothario; gold and silver strings for plain walking-canes, with silver and gold tassels for plain Master Balance; vastly snug shaving equipages; brocaded shoes and slippers; ladies' shuttles for the thrifty in the knotting amusements; songs suited to the various humours and affections of the mind."

"Bravo, friend Rivington!" exclaimed Herbert, "you do not expend all your imagination in the invention of news."

"Is there nothing but this nonsense in the paper, Belle? What is that in capitals about letters from England?"

Isabella resumed: "Letters from England say they will never acknowledge the Independence of the United States, while there is a soldier to be raised, or a tester to be expended, in the three kingdoms!"

"John Bull for ever! What say you to that, Mr. Herbert?" asked his father, exultingly.

"*Nous verrons*, sir!—but, mercy upon us! what is this?" Herbert read aloud from the Boston paper: "We regret to state that the daughter of Mrs. Lee, of Westbrook, left her mother's house two weeks since, with the supposed intention of going to New-York. The young lady has been for some time in a state of partial mental alienation." A description of Bessie's person followed, and an earnest request that any information obtained might be transmitted to the unhappy mother.

Both Herbert and Isabella were filled with consternation and anxiety; and, after revolving the past, both came to the same conclusion as to the probable origin of poor Bessie's mental malady. Mr. Linwood, who only recollected her as a quiet, pretty little girl, exhausted his sympathy in a few inquiries and exclamations, became somewhat impatient of the sadness that had overclouded his children. "We are as doleful as the tombs here," he said: "What can keep your aunt Archer to-night, Isabella?—Ah, here she comes—right glad to see you, Mary. Belle and Herbert are knocked up by an unlucky bit of news." The news was communicated to Mrs. Archer, who entered deeply into their feelings.

"Ah," said she, "this explains a note I received this morning from Captain Lee."

"From Eliot?" exclaimed Herbert.

"Yes; he sent by a courier, who came to Sir Henry, a most acceptable present—a set of chess-

men for the children, which he has contrived, and aided by an ingenious private, made for them."

"Chessmen contrived by a rebel!" said Mr. Linwood—"of course he has left out the king, queen, and bishop?"

"Pardon me—he may think kings, queens, and bishops very fit playthings."

"But what says the note?" asked Herbert, impatiently.

"It says, that if the chessboard should fail to be of use to Ned and Lizzy, it has at least served the purpose of partially diverting his thoughts from a grief that almost drives him mad. Of course he alludes to this sad affair."

"Undoubtedly," replied Herbert; "and this business of the chessboard is just like himself—he is the most extraordinary fellow! I never knew him in any trouble, small or great, that he did not turn to doing something for somebody or other by way of a solace—a balm to his hurt mind."

"I do not wonder you love him so devotedly," said Isabella.

"Oh, Belle," whispered Herbert in return, "had Heaven but have put him in Jasper's place, or made Jasper like him!"

Mrs. Archer caught the words, and in spite of her own discretion and Isabella's painful blushes, she uttered a deep and insuppressible "Amen."

"Come, come, what are you all about?" said

Mr. Linwood: "suppose you imitate this wonderful hero of yours in the use of his mental panacea, and comfort me with a game of whist. Do you play as deep a game as you used to, Herbert; trump your partner's trick, and finesse with a knave and ten spot?"

Herbert confessed he had forgotten the little he knew "Well, then, you may brood over your Yankee paper, and we will call in your mother, who, in five-and-twenty years' drilling, has learned just enough *not* to trump her partner's tricks."

Mrs. Linwood was summoned, and the party formed. Mr. Linwood was in high good-humour, and though Isabella made some inscrutable plays, all went smoothly till the family party was alarmed by a tap at the door; and before any one had time to reply to it, the door was opened, and Lady Anne Seton appeared. Startled by the appearance of a stranger, and somewhat disconcerted by perceiving the embarrassment caused by her intrusion, "Shall I go back?" she asked, her hand still on the door.

"Oh, no—no," cried Mr. Linwood, "come in, my dear little girl, by all means; you promised me a game of piquet, and I, an old savage, forgot it, and so I have forfeited my right, and now make it over to this young man, my son Herbert." Lady Anne turned a surprised, sparkling, and inquiring glance to Herbert, as much as to say, "Is it possible!" and Herbert made his bow of presentation. "You know," continued the father, "that this

young man is in limbo; but you do not know, and be sure you let no one else know, that Sir Henry, God bless him! permits the rascal to visit us privately."

"Am I really trusted with an important secret? —delightful!—and does any thing depend on my keeping it?"

"The continuance of my brother's visits and Sir Henry's favour," replied Isabella, emphatically, alarmed at the necessity of confiding their secret to one so gay and inexperienced as Lady Anne.

Inexperienced she was, but true and single-hearted. "Do not look so solemn, my dear Miss Linwood," she said; "indeed I will not tell. I am too much puffed up with the first important secret I ever had in my keeping to part with it carelessly. I am even with aunt and Jasper now, with their everlasting private talks; and when it is stupid at home, I may come here, may I not?"

"Always," interposed Mr. Linwood, really delighted with the accession of the charming girl to their circle. Mrs. Linwood, who only waited for her husband to strike the key-note, was voluble in her hospitable expressions. Herbert looked the most unequivocal welcome; and Lady Anne, never querulous, did not trouble herself about Isabella's merely civil assent, and perhaps did not notice it. From this time her visits were almost as regular as Herbert's. She was little addicted to romance; but every young girl has a spice of it, and Herbert's

romantic and precarious position increased the charm of his frank and spirited character. A dear lover of sunshine was Herbert; and these short domestic interludes, brightened by Lady Anne, were hours in paradise to him. All day in his gloomy prison he looked forward to his release from purgatory; and, once engaged at a side-table with his lively partner in the most fascinating of all *tête-à-tête* games, or round the *petit-souper*, which his good mother spent the day in contriving and concocting, he forgot the ills of life, till the summons from his keeper reminded him that he had still to buffet with his portion of them.

"If I do not mistake," said Mrs. Archer to Isabella, after the breaking up of one of their evening meetings, "Herbert and Lady Anne are beginning to see visions, and dream dreams."

"Heaven forbid!"

"And why, my dear Belle, should Heaven forbid so natural and pleasant a consequence of their familiar intercourse?"

"How can you ask, aunt Mary? I could not forgive Herbert if he were so soon to forget poor Bessie."

"We must take man as he is, Belle. Herbert is too lighthearted to cherish a hopeless passion, he regards his love for Bessie Lee as a dream, and, rely on it, he is thoroughly awakened from it. You must have perceived that he has not been desperately afflicted about your unfortunate little friend?"

"Yes, I have—but men do not show their feelings."

"Some men do not, but Herbert does; and rely on it, Belle, he is not of a temper to continue to love a person (even if poor little Bessie were not, as she must now be, utterly lost to him) whose heart is another's."

"I suppose you are right, aunt Mary," replied Isabella, after a moment's hesitation, colouring deeply; "the whole sex are alike incapable of the generosity of unrequited affection!" *Unacknowledged* was her mental reading of unrequited.

"Substitute folly or weakness for generosity, Belle, and you will take a more masculine, and, it may be, a more rational view of the case."

"Oh, aunt Mary, are you, like the rest of the world, giving up all feeling for what you call rationality!"

"No, my dear child, but I have learned that what you call *feeling*, what constitutes the dream of a few weeks, months, or it may be years of youth, makes but a small portion of the reality or the worth of life. Providence has kindly so organized man, that he cannot waste his affections in one hopeless, fruitless concentration; nor lose life in a tissue of vain regrets. The stream that is obstructed in one course will take another, and enrich and beautify regions for which it did not, at first, seem destined."

Isabella was not just now in a humour to assent

to Mrs. Archer's conclusions, but her mind was the good ground in which the seed could not be lost. She was conscious that, though her aunt's strictures were ostensibly directed to Herbert, they had some bearing on herself. She was in a position the most tormenting to a mind prompt both to decide and act. Since Lady Anne's arrival she had rarely seen Meredith. This she admitted was in part her own fault. She had been restrained by her promise to Sir Henry Clinton from communicating to Jasper the favour granted Herbert. "But when she gave the promise to Sir Henry, ought she not to have excepted Jasper? Was it not due to him? and would she not have made the exception, through all the blushing and faltering it must have cost her, had she not felt sure that Sir Henry himself would have made Meredith a party to the secret?"

Sir Henry, after a little reflection, was ashamed of the spell that had been wrought on him, and communicated it to no one.

Meredith, partly spurred by pride, partly led on by the incessant manœuvres of his mother, and partly incited by the worldly advantages of an alliance with Lady Anne, and flattered too by his cousin's frank and affectionate manner, was fast verging towards that point, to attain which his mother had compassed sea and land.

He had confidently expected that Isabella would at once and fully have reciprocated his declarations

of attachment. Her reserve had abased his pride, piqued his vanity, and disappointed his affection. He believed he truly loved her, and he did, as truly as he could love. But Jasper Meredith's love, like water that rises through minerals, was impregnated with much foreign material. He at first had no formed purpose in his devotion to Lady Anne; but after being twice or thrice repulsed from Mr. Linwood's door by "My master is better, sir but not yet down stairs;" and "Miss Isabella is very much engaged," he half resolved no longer to resist the "tide in his affairs that was leading on to fortune."

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Some die of weariness,
Some of disease, and some insanity,
And some of withered or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are numbered in the lists of fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names."

BYRON.

BESSIE LEE's sylvan lodge harmonized so well with her wild fancies, that when she awoke it seemed no more strange to her than her accustomed sleeping-place. Whatever she might be destined afterward to suffer from this exposure on the damp earth through a cold autumnal night, she was as unconscious of the ills that flesh is heir to as if she were a disimbodied spirit. "Sluggard that I am!" she exclaimed, starting up and shaking off the heavy dew-drops, "the spirits of morning are at worship, and I sleeping! the birds are singing their hymns, and I, that have been watched and guarded, am silent." She leaned her cheek on the mossy stem of a tree, and began to repeat the Lord's prayer: "'Our father'—ay, nature worships with me—beautiful waterfall, majestic trees, glad light, is he not *our* father?—'hallowed be his name,'—ye hallow his name, for ye are the manifestations of his wisdom, the ministers of his love,

Natural religion

the shadows of celestial beauty!—'thy kingdom come'—it is come here—obedience, peace, serenity, are his kingdom—war is not—care is not—love is not—love to fallible mortals, for there no peace is—so I will on my pilgrimage, and break the last link in the chain—then will I return here, finish my prayer, and lay me down and rest again."

Thus mingling with her celestial meditations one earthly purpose, she retraced her way to the road, and looked about in vain for her horse, who, having obeyed his rational impulses, was now far on his way homeward. "It was not kind of you, Steady," she said, as she came to the conclusion he had abandoned her; but without one thought of relinquishing her purpose, or one doubt of her ability to effect it. She walked on for about half a mile, and probably began to have some obscure sense of tremulousness and weakness, for, seeing a horse equipped with saddle and bridle hitched to the fence, and a basket standing by him containing biscuits and apples, she laughed aloud, exclaiming, "Who would have thought it!" and then checking herself, raised her eyes devoutly and added, "yet, I might have known they would be provided by the wayside, just when I wanted them. I wonder there is not a woman's saddle, but I can manage;" and taking the basket in one hand, she mounted, and rode briskly on. She proceeded without any hinderance or molestation whatever, now and then, probably, from an insupportable feel-

ing of weariness, dismounting and lying for a moment under the shadow of a tree. It was about the middle of the afternoon, when she was entering the street of a little village, that she heard behind her the trampling of horses on the full gallop, and outcries of "Stop thief!" Her horse, incited more by the uproar at his heels than by any impulse she was able to give him, sprang forward. The people rushed from their houses—their screams bewildered her. She gazed fearfully around her; her wearied horse soon slackened his speed, and one of her pursuers reached her just at the moment that, having dropped the bridle from her powerless hand she was falling from her saddle. "Time you was spent, young madam," cried her rough assistant, as, supporting half her weight, he prevented her sinking to the ground.

The people of the village, chiefly women and children, gathered around, all gazing on Bessie with scrutinizing glances. Her wandering eye and blanched cheek must have half told her story, for not one of them spoke till she, drawing up from the arm that supported her, asked, with an air of offended dignity, "Why are ye so unmannerly to me?"

"Ha, ha—not quite so topping, miss—serve your writ, Mr. Sheriff," replied one of her pursuers. "Pretty high, to talk about manners, when you've been riding fifty miles on a stolen horse."

"Stolen!" echoed Bessie, "indeed, I did not steal him."

"How upon 'arth did you get him then? answer that."

"I took him—" the standers-by interrupted her with a coarse laugh; but Bessie, without heeding them, proceeded: "I took him, where he stood awaiting me."

"Now, if that is not a high joke! Just hear me, good people—the sheriff can swear to all I say. This is Squire Saunders's horse—you have all heard of the squire?" They had all heard of Squire Saunders, whose fame rayed through a large circle. "Well, the squire rode up to his wood-lot this morning, to see about a trespass that's committing there—you know, sheriff; and the squire just hitched his horse to the fence, and went up into the woods, and got out of his reckoning; and two hours after, when he came upon the road—"

"Take care of that poor young woman," cried a benevolent looking man who was passing in an ox-cart, "don't you see she can't stand?"

"I *am* tired," said Bessie, sinking to the ground, and putting her hand to her head; "this noise tires me."

The spectators exchanged glances of inquiry and pity; the sheriff looked compassionate; his companion sturdy, and resolved not to be *taken in.* The man of the ox-cart stopped his vehicle, and joined the group: "Are ye all blind and deaf," he

added, "that ye do not see the poor girl's mind is unsettled?"

"Oh no, friend," said Bessie, shaking her head, and looking up with a faint smile, "you are very much mistaken—my mind is not the least unsettled —indeed, it every day becomes stronger and more capable than it was."

Her champion looked to the standers-by for their assent to this confirmation of his opinion, and then turning to the sheriff, said, "You will not, I am sure, trouble her farther?"

"No, I'll be hanged if I do!"

"Nor you?" appealing to the sheriff's attendant.

"I don't know—if I were sure—I don't like to be outwitted—remember, sheriff, it was for horse and *thief* the squire offered the reward."

"The devil take the reward, Dan!"

"You may say so—for you that's got an office can afford it, but I'm a volunteer. But since you all take on so about it, if you're a mind to contribute and pay something towards my expenses and trouble and so on, I'll trust to the squire for the rest."

"I have not one copper to pay," said Bessie's friend.

"Pay! is that all he wants?" asked Bessie, thrusting her hand into her pocket, and giving into his greedy grasp her few coins; "perhaps it was meant," she added, in a confidential tone to her champion, "that I should pay for the use of the

horse, but I know he was provided for me. Are you satisfied?" she asked, in a tone to pierce the heart; "indeed, I have given you all."

"He shall be satisfied—he must be satisfied!" cried every voice at once; and the man, perceiving the general sentiment was against him, was glad to mount his horse and follow the sheriff, who was already leading away Squire Saunders's recovered property. It was evident the sheriff's organ of benevolence had resisted the influence of his station.

"And now what is to be done with this poor helpless thing?" asked Barlow, the kind-hearted man who had so far befriended Bessie. At this question, two or three of the spectators slunk away; the rest exchanged fearful and uncertain glances; one or two murmured that they "did not love to have crazy folks in their houses;" and it was obvious that the benevolence of all was restrained by that irrational fear which so much increases the sufferings of those who are mentally diseased. No one offering an asylum for the poor wanderer, Barlow turned to her and asked, "What will you do now, my poor child?"

"Oh, go on."

"Go on! where, in the name of wonder?"

"To New-York."

"Impossible! how are you to go?"

"I must go—more than life depends on it—now, I cannot tell exactly. I do not think I could walk very far," she vainly attempted to rise; "but do

not be concerned about me, for certainly He who hath helped me so far will not now desert me."

The gentle girl's unconsciousness of her wants was more touching than the most passionate appeal.

"Will you go home with me?" asked Barlow, after wiping his eyes, and clearing his voice.

"Oh, no, I thank you; I cannot lose any time."

"Poor child! but," he added, "I live six miles nearer to New-York than this, and I can take you so far on your way."

"Then indeed I will go. Did I not tell you, O ye of little faith, that the way would be provided?" Again, and again without success, she attempted to rise.

"Lend a hand, neighbours," said Barlow; "the straw on my cart is clean, and we will lay her on it." Bessie was placed in the cart, and driven to Barlow's humble habitation, a dwelling-house adjoining a blacksmith's shop, within a few miles of Hartford, in Connecticut.

Barlow would have been justifiable, if ever man was, in going on "the other side," and leaving Bessie Lee to the chance mercies of others. But Barlow's heart bore a faint resemblance to his own anvil; the stroke of his fellow-creature's necessities always brought forth sparks of kindness.

"Dear me!" exclaimed his wife, when he entered their little dwelling, supporting Bessie with one arm; "who have you got here?"

"Open the door into the bedroom, Martha, and

I'll tell you afterward." The door was promptly opened, the bedspread turned down, and Bessie laid upon the clean inviting bed.

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" she said; "I shall tell mother and Eliot how very kind you are to me."

"Dear me!" said pitiful Mrs. Barlow.

"Oh, ma'am, I am very well," said Bessie, replying to her compassionate look; "only a little tired —do not let me oversleep to-morrow morning."

"Give her some warm milk, Martha; and let her sleep, if she can—it's her only chance."

The hospitality was done, and Bessie left to the ministry of nature, while Barlow related to his marvelling wife all he knew of her. "Well," said she, as he concluded, "I do feel for her folks; and yet she don't look as if she belonged to this world. I have dreamed of seeing angels, and she looks like them; but like nothing made out of clay. I'm glad you brought her home, Barlow; it's a great easement to the heart to do a kindness, though we are in a poor case to entertain strangers, even if they be angels."

"We be in a poor situation; but it would have been awful to have left such a young, delicate, innocent, beautiful fellow-creature to perish by the wayside!"

"Dear me! yes, indeed."

"Or to have left her to people that were so slack about helping her."

"It would."

"And so, knowing your feelings, Martha, I've done what I have done."

"You've done right, Barlow."

"I don't know, you are so poorly, and the boys sick. Have they missed their chill to-day?"

"No, neither they nor I."

Barlow rose, looked at the pale faces of his little boys, who were lying in a truckle-bed, then at his sickly wife, and shook his head.

"Martha, I am afraid I have been presumptuous."

"Dear me, husband! don't worry about that; what would be the use of sickness if it did not give us feelings for others?"

"True, Martha; and somehow I could not help it; and now I can't but think Providence will help us through with what his finger pointed out. I have repented of a great many things in my day; but I never saw reason to repent of a good deed—look in the bedroom, Martha, and see if she is sleeping."

"Dear me, no! but there's a quiet smile on her lips, and her beautiful eyes are raised; and she seems just like a lamb looking at the shepherd."

"If she's still she may fall asleep; so let us ask a blessing on her and the rest of us, and then we'll to bed ourselves."

What grace and dignity do the devotion and compassion of such pure hearts impart to the dwelling of the poor man! Oh ye, who fare sumptuously every day, imitate him in his only luxury—the luxury of deeds never to be repented of!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"The man I speak of cannot in the world be singly counterpoised."

A WEEK subsequent to Bessie Lee's arrival at Barlow's, a violent hallooing and knocking were heard at the blacksmith's shop; and no answer being given, Barlow's house-door was soon beset with impatient knocks and cries of—"Halloo, blacksmith, you are wanted!"

Barlow rose from the bed, where he had been laid by a severe attack of intermittent fever, and answered, that he was utterly unable to go to his workshop. "What does he say?" asked a young gentleman in a foreign accent, who with two or three attendants was impatiently awaiting Barlow's services.

"He says he cannot come, sir."

"Cannot! *Ce n'est pas le mot d'aujourd'hui.*"

"Neither, I think, sir," replied the first speaker, is *must* current in these parts."

"*Vous avez raison, mon ami; mais mon Dieu!* What are we to do?"

The gentleman, being very much in the habit of overcoming other men's impossibilities every day of his life, dismounted, gave his bridle to an at

tendant, and walked up to the open door of our friend Barlow, who, on seeing the uniform of an American general officer, was somewhat abashed, though its wearer was a fair young man, with a remarkably gentle and benignant countenance. "If it were barely possible, sir," said Barlow, "I should be happy to serve you; but I am scarcely able to stand."

"Ah, my good friend, I see you are in a bad position, and your wife too. How long have you been ill, madame?"

"I have had the *fever 'nagur*, sir, six weeks, off and on."

"Fever 'nagur! *Qu'est que c'est?*" asked the gentleman, aside, of his companion.

"Fever and ague."

"Ah, *je comprends!* very bad malady, madame, very bad; you should take every day a little port wine."

Mrs. Barlow smiled. "Dear me! yes, sir, if I had it."

"You go or send often to Hartford?" resumed the stranger, addressing Barlow.

"Almost every day, sir."

"Ah, very well! I have some port wine there in a friend's cellar. I will give you an order for a bottle or two; and I pray you to send for it; and you and your wife, and these little fellows, who by their blue lips have the ague too, shall drink to my health and your own."

"Thank you, sir," said Mrs. Barlow; "a little port wine is what I have been all along thinking would cure us—dear me!"

"Is it only one horse, sir, that wants shoeing?" asked Barlow, tying a handkerchief round his throat.

"Only one, my good friend; my own brave beast, who has done much good service, and has much more to do. *Pauvre bête!* it goes to my heart to have his hoof broken up."

Barlow felt as if his strength came with the sympathy and consideration manifested by the person who needed it. "I guess, sir," he said, "I could stand long enough to do so small a job."

"Ah, my friend, *mille*—a thousand thanks; but spare your strength to do what no one else can do. Here, orderly, kindle up the blacksmith's fire, quickly." While this was in preparation, the stranger took writing materials from his pocket, and addressed the following note to a person whose munificence is still remembered, though he has long ago gone to the enjoyment of his treasures, where he was then wisely laying them up.

"My dear Wadsworth,—I have just chanced to call at a poor blacksmith's, who, with his worthy family, is at death's door with a protracted intermittent. It seems to me that port, like that I drank with you yesterday, might restore them. As the man looks like too *independent* an American

to beg a favour, I have taken the liberty to give him this order for a bottle or two, telling him, with a *poetic* truth, that I had wine in your cellar. It is your own fault if all your friends feel that they have a property in your possessions. Adieu."

Just as the stranger had signed and sealed this billet, the inner door opened, and Bessie Lee appeared, her cheeks died with fever, her eyes bright as gems, her lips of the brightest vermilion, and her beautiful hair hanging in many a tangled curl over her face and neck. "*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the stranger.

"Dear me! my child, go back," said Mrs. Barlow, gently repulsing her. Bessie, however, without heeding her, pressed forward, and addressing herself to the stranger in an energetic, business sort of a way, "You are going to New-York?" she said.

"Not exactly, young lady; but I am going in that direction."

"Do go back into the bedroom,—do, husband, persuade her—"

"No, no, Martha, let her have her own way."

"Thank you," said Bessie. "Will you be kind enough, sir, to step into my room?—this buzzing confuses me."

The stranger, with characteristic sagacity, had already half penetrated the truth. He motioned to Bessie to precede him, saying in a low voice to

Mrs. Barlow, "Your husband is right. It is best your child should have her own way."

"Dear me, she is not our child, sir!"

"She does not look as if she were," thought the stranger; but there was no time for farther explanation. As soon as they were fairly within the inner room, Bessie shut the door. She seemed at first disconcerted; but instantly rallying, she said, "I am unknown to you, sir, but your face seems to have that heavenly sentence written on it: 'Ask and it shall be given to you.'"

"Then why do you hesitate?"

"*They* would think it so strange that I should be asking such a favour of a stranger—a young gentleman—"

"Who are *they?*"

"My mother and brother."

"Their names, my friend?"

"I cannot tell their names. My present object is to get to New-York as soon as possible, where I have business of the greatest importance. I have been staying here for some days with very kind people. I would not wound their feelings on any account," she added, in a whisper; "but they are very weak-minded—no judgment at all; indeed, there are few people that have, so I do not choose to confide to them the reason of my actions. All will be explained and published when I return from New-York."

"But, my dear young lady, are you aware that New-York is in possession of the enemy?"

"Oh, sir, I have no enemies."

"Rough soldiers—foreign soldiers, my fair friend, will make no exception in your favour."

"You do not know," she replied, drawing up her little person with an air of assured but mysterious superiority, "you do not know that I am one of those of whom it was said, that 'their angels do always stand before my Father;' and I could tell you of such difficult passes where invisible spirits have guided and tended me—so faithfully! but that at another time. There is not the slightest danger in my going to New-York—indeed, I have no choice; I must go."

"Do you know any one in New-York?"

"Yes, Miss Linwood, the friend to whom I am going."

"Miss Linwood? Miss Isabella Linwood? Ah, I have heard of her."

"She is not my only—" friend, she was going to say; a shade passed over her countenance, and she added, "acquaintance in New-York. Now, sir, all that I am going to ask of you is for liberty to ride behind you, or one of your attendants, as far as you go on my way."

The stranger, compassionate as he felt, could scarcely forbear a smile. "We should be hardly a proper escort for you, my fair friend," he replied.

"Oh, fear not for that; I am so fenced about—so guarded by unseen and powerful spirits, that it matters not with whom, if I but get forward."

After a moment of anxious thought, "Tell me, young lady," he replied, "the name of that brother of whom you spoke, and on my honour I will do all in my power for you."

"No—never—this is a temptation of that evil one who so long led me astray, to turn me again from the straight path, to frustrate my purpose. I do not blame you, sir. He has before, in my dreams and at other times, whispered to me, that if I were but to speak my brother's name, I should be cared for; but this would be trusting to a human arm. No: his name must not pass my lips." If she had then spoken it, how different would have been the fate of many individuals!

The benevolent stranger perceived that the impressions (whether illusions or not) from which Bessie acted were ineffaceable, and that she had that fixedness of purpose from which it seems impossible, by reason or art of any sort, to turn an insane person. He was at an utter loss what to do or say, and merely murmured, "Would to Heaven I could serve you!"

"You would and cannot! Indeed, you look to me like those favourites of Heaven, who both will and can. Who are you?"

"I am more generous than you, my friend, and I will tell you. My name is La Fayette."

"*La Fayette!* Now is it not wonderful," exclaimed Bessie, clasping her hands and looking upward, her whole face bright and rapturous, "Is it

not wonderful that he who is chosen and set apart of God for the cause of freedom, the friend of Washington, the best friend of my struggling country, should be guided to this little dwelling to find *me* out and aid me? You cannot choose but serve me," she added, laying her hand on his, and faintly and wildly laughing.

"And I will serve you, my poor girl, so help me God!" he replied, kissing her faded, feverish hand. "Sit you here quietly, and I will see what can be done."

"I will wait patiently, but remember, there is but one thing to be done."

La Fayette appeared in the outer room: his eyes were suffused with tears, and for a moment he found it difficult to command his voice. "You can make nothing of her," said Mrs. Barlow, looking inquiringly. "No? I thought so—she is the meekest and the beautifullest mortal, the gentlest and the most obstinate, that ever I came across."

"Where is your husband, my good friend?"

"Shoeing your horse, sir."

"Ah, that's very kind, very kind indeed; I will go and speak with him." Accordingly, he proceeded to the workshop, and there received from Barlow all the particulars he could communicate of poor Bessie Lee. "It is not only her master beautiful looks, sir," said Barlow, in conclusion; "but she seems so pure in heart, and so well nurtured, and so pretty spoken. She draws many a

tear from us—being weak and sick, sir, makes one easy to cry."

"The fountain of such tears is a good heart, my friend; and no one need apologize for letting them gush out now and then. You say you have made every effort to find out who the poor girl is?"

"Yes, sir, indeed I have; but it is impossible. I have thought of advertising the stray lamb," he added, with a smile; "but somehow I did not love to put her in the newspapers."

"That, perhaps, would have been wisest; but now I think the best thing that can be done is to gratify her ruling desire, and get her to New-York as soon as possible."

"Ay, indeed, sir; but how get her there now?"

"Why, my friend, you must furnish the way, and I the means. You know that those of us who are best off in these times have no superfluity. I cannot spare more than a guinea from the smal. sum I have with me."

"A guinea is a great sum, sir, in these hard times; but—"

"But not enough to get the young lady to New-York, I am aware of that; and therefore, in addition, I shall give you my watch, which, being fine gold and a repeater, will enable you to raise enough for her necessities, and a surplus to make your family comfortable till you come to the anvil again."

"This is too much," replied Barlow, bending low over the horse's hoof; either his gratitude or

his sickness making it "easy for him to cry again."

"Not too much, nor quite enough, my friend. You will find some worthy man and woman to accompany her to the American lines; and I will do what I can to secure her safe conduct. She will certainly go safely to the British posts, and beyond, I trust. Surely none of God's creatures, who have a trace of his image, can be inhuman to her; but we must take all precautions."

"Yes, indeed, sir; war, like a slaughter-house, breeds vermin; and there be those abroad whose hearts are as hard as my anvil."

"We will do our best to protect her from such."

La Fayette then wrote an earnest recommendation of Bessie to the protection and kindness of all Americans. He requested the American officer to forward her under the protection of a flag, and finally addressed a note to the British commander, and all his officers and agents, stating the condition of the young person whom he commended to their humanity, and praying them to expedite her progress to New-York, where (as he thought proper to state, knowing Mr. Linwood to be a tory), the friend to whose house she was going, Robert Linwood, Esq., resided. The surprise of Barlow when he received these notes, and saw the powerful, all-honoured, and loved name of La Fayette attached to them, is indescribable. La Fayette gave the watch into his hands, and without waiting for his

thanks, he pressed Barlow's hand, mounted his horse, joined his companions, and rode off at full speed. Barlow gazed after him till the cavalcade disappeared; then, after a fervent thanksgiving to God, he said, looking at the watch, "I must pledge this; but if Heaven prosper me I will redeem it, and leave it, as better than all my fast property, to my children."

We have graced our page by recording here one of His unnumbered good deeds, who has filled up the measure of human benevolence by every manifestation, from the least to the greatest, of this divine quality.*

CHAPTER XXIX.

"But this was what I knew had come to pass,
When, answ'ring with your vacant no, and yes,
You fed upon your thoughts and mark'd me not."

"My dear Lady Anne," said Mrs. Meredith to her niece, as they were one morning sitting together, "you seem to have taken a wonderful liking to that knotting" (Lady Anne had become, as our friend Rivington has it, "thrifty in the knotting amusement")—"where in the world did you learn it?"

"Mrs. Linwood taught me."

"So I should think. It is as monotonous as she is."

"Oh, aunt, I find it charming! It is the very perfection of existence to have an occupation like this for your fingers, while your heart and mind are left free to rove to the end of the world, or, what is better still, to be at the service of some agreeable companion you may chance to have be side you."

"*Chacun à son gout!*" said Mrs. Meredith, taking up a book, with a vexing consciousness that she was not the "agreeable companion" preferred to her niece's maiden meditations. Lady Anne had not spoken five words for the hour they had been sitting together. As the morning was rainy

the ladies were like to remain uninterrupted; and it was too tempting an opportunity for Mrs. Meredith to make an attack she had long been meditating, to be foregone; so she put aside her book and her vexation, and said in a voice sufficiently *untoned* for an old diplomatist, "You seem quite fond of the Linwoods, my love?"

"I am, aunt."

"You find the choleric, peevish, egotistical old man charming?"

"Indeed, I do sincerely think him a delightful old gentleman."

"And that living manifestation of all the mediocrities, his patient consort?"

"The most amiable woman in the world."

"And their lofty, capricious daughter, now silent and infolded in her own sublimities, like a worshipped idol on its pedestal, and now gracious as a new-made queen?"

"And always captivating and gentle, aunt." Mrs. Meredith threw up her hands and eyes: "I mean *almost* always gentle as a woman should be. For my part, I do not fancy perpetual sunshine. I am much of a certain English sea-captain's way of thinking, who, after being becalmed in the sunny waters of France, sailed away in one of his own northeasters and thick fogs, and thanked Heaven he was out of that d—d sunshine."

"Your illustration is a fortunate one, Lady Anne; I congratulate you on your peculiar taste. But

for this gusty variety in the temper of your friend, your long evenings with that little family *coterie* would be rather of the becalmed order."

"The evenings never seem long to me," replied Lady Anne, her face dimpling with recollected pleasure.

"How in the world do you kill time?"

"Oh, the old gentleman, and Mrs. Archer, and Isabella and her mother, play whist."

"And you sit by and look on?—this is inscrutable, that you, my dear child, who are so admired, courted, worshipped, should be content to play so obscure a part. If there were a young man in the case—if that son of Mr. Linwood were at home—by-the-way, they seem to make themselves exceedingly comfortable while he is in durance—yes, if the juice of 'that little western flower' were on your eyelids, I could understand why you should thus 'madly dote.'"

Lady Anne laughed and shook her head, as if to say, "Puzzle it out if you can."

Mrs. Meredith was displeased; but like many persons who have self-command and good taste, she chose to show her angry feelings in the light of gentle emotions. Her voice faltered, and her eyes filled with tears (her eyes, it may be remembered, were fine, the prototypes of her son's brilliant orbs). "I ought, my dear girl," she said, "to be satisfied if you are; but I have so set my heart upon you, the only child of my dear lamented

brother. I had hoped that Jasper and I should make our home attractive to you; that we might have, at least, a portion of your affection."

"My dear aunt!" exclaimed Lady Anne, throwing down her knotting, "I—I—" do love you dearly, she was on the point of adding, but she was too honest to indulge her good-nature at the expense of truth, and she said, "I feel your kindness to me—I should be most ungrateful if I did not."

"Grateful, undoubtedly, you are; and so you would have been to any faithful guardian; but the heart asks something more. You manifest neither to me nor to Jasper more than the affection of a common relative. Whatever place I may take in the scale of your friends, your cousin is certainly no common person."

"No, indeed, that he is not," said Lady Anne, charmed that she could sooth her aunt and speak sincerely. "Jasper is by far the most agreeable gentleman you have introduced to me here. He is a little abstracted now and then; but when he knows what he is saying, he is perfectly delightful. I told Isabella Linwood last evening that it was a mystery to me—*une veritable merveille*—that she had never fallen in love with Jasper."

"What did she say?" asked Mrs. Meredith, eagerly, and off her guard.

"I do not remember. I believe she said nothing."

"A provoking, inscrutable person she is," thought Mrs. Meredith; and then made a remark which she

meant to be what the lawyers call *leading* :—"There was a report before we came of an attachment between Jasper and Miss Linwood."

"Bless me! was there?"

"Why are you surprised?"

"For the best reason in the world, aunt—neither seems to fancy the other. As for Isabella, whenever I praise cousin Jasper, she is either quite silent, or turns the conversation, as if she did not like to appear to disagree with me."

"Ah, my young lady," thought the aunt, "you do not see quite through a millstone."

Jasper at this moment entered. "Come here, cousin," said Lady Anne; and when he had approached, she added, in a playful voice, putting her hand (the prettiest hand in the world) on his arm, "Were you *ever* in love with—" her mischievous pause nearly suspended the pulsations of Meredith's heart, "with—don't be scared—the most loveable person in the world?"

He had recovered himself. "If I never have been," he replied, seizing her hand and kissing it, "I shall soon be—irretrievably."

The past, the future, rushed upon him, and overpowered his self-command. He turned from Lady Anne and left the apartment. "Oh, Jasper! Jasper!" cried Lady Anne, blushing, laughing, and springing after him, "stop one minute—you did not understand me." But before she reached the stairs. the outer door closed after Meredith. Mrs.

Meredith clasped her hands. Jasper was won—Lady Anne must of course be !—and she seemed to herself to have reached the summit of her Pisgah, and thence to descry the promised land for which she had come *to* the wilderness. That "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip" is a proverb somewhat musty; but it pithily indicates the sudden mutations to which poor humanity is liable

CHAPTER XXX.

"I would to Heaven I had your potency,
And you were Isabel! should it then be thus?
No! I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,
And what a prisoner."

We change the scene from Mrs. Meredith s drawing-room to the gloomiest cell in the city prison, where, stretched on a heap of straw, lay a poor wretch condemned to be hung at four o'clock in the afternoon of that day. The door opened, and Isabella entered, attended by Rose, and escorted by a turnkey, who, having set down a candle to aid the feeble light of the cell, went out himself and locked the door upon them.

"Take up the light, Rose," said Isabella, who was shivering, not so much from the unsunned air of the apartment, as at the presence of a fellow-creature in such circumstances; "hold it near him, Rose, so that I can see his face."

Rose approached close to him and said, as if announcing the visit of an angel, "Here's a lady come to see you." He made no reply; and, after an eager survey, she turned to her young mistress and said, "His senses are clean gone!" Isabella held Rose's arm while she gazed at him. His face was ashen, his hair was in matted masses, and his

pale blue eye wandered inexpressively. "Who are you?" asked Isabella. The music of her voice for an instant fixed his uncertain gaze, but he made no reply; and again his eye was bent on vacancy. "Who are you, friend?" she repeated.

"I a'n't nobody," he replied, in a broken voice, between a laugh and a sob.

"Have you no friend?" He turned his face to the straw, and muttered something inaudibly. "What does he say, Rose?"

"Turn up your face so the lady can hear," said Rose. He obeyed; but Rose's voice seemed to have broken the spell of her mistress's, and he remained silent.

"Rouse yourself, my good friend," said Isabella, "I wish to be of service to you. Can you give me any reason why you should not die the death to which you are sentenced?"

"No—lief as not."

"It cannot be—you must have something—some friend for whom you would like to live and come out of this place."

"Had!—had!" the poor creature sobbed like a child.

"Tell me," said Isabella, eagerly, "the name of this friend?" But the obstinate mood had again seized him, and, though she varied the question and put it in every possible form, he gave no sign of answer.

"Try him upon some other hook, Miss Belle," whispered Rose.

"How long had you been with the skinners when you were taken?"

Now he answered promptly—"Years!—years!"

"Years?—that cannot be."

"Cannot? A'n't the minutes years to the child that's crying for its mammy, hey?" He had risen on his elbow; but he again sunk back on the straw, and renewed his piteous crying.

"What does this mean? What can be done for him?" exclaimed Isabella. "My poor friend, death is very near to you—do you know it?"

"Yes, yes, lady. Ha'n't they brought me a new suit?" He pointed to the execution suit that was folded up and lying beside him. "There be three times in every one's life when they're sure of a new suit:—when they're born, when they're married, and when they die. I've got my last and prettiest, I'm thinking, for I remember granny reading about the angels being in white robes."

His mind seemed now more collected, and Isabella ventured to ask him if he were willing to die?

"Glad on't—don't look at me, lady, with that bright watery eye—I *am* glad on't."

"Have you prayed for the pardon of your sins?"

"Haven't any—never had—never wronged anybody—nor wished it—nor thought on't."

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed Isabella, "what is to be done?"

"For me, lady?—nothing."

"Do you not wish to live ?"

"Yes—with him. 'Out him ?—no."

"Who ?" Isabella spoke too eagerly. He looked at her, shook his head, then broke into an exulting laugh like a boy who has seen a trap and escaped it.

"Miss Belle," said Rose, "you are wasting your tears and your feelings—we must all die once, and the stroke can't come in better time to him than now, when he's so willing to go."

"Willing ? glad, hey ! nobody cares for me, and I cares for nobody but him ; I think he be dead ; but," he added, laying his hand on Isabella's arm, "be he dead or be he living, you'll see him—your soul is kin to his, lady—and mind you tell him how the skinners kept me till the reg'lars came—did not tell 'em I was not a skinner—cheated 'em, hey !"

Isabella waited till he was through, and then said quietly, "Who did you tell me to give your message to ?"

"Misser Eliot." At the utterance of this name poor Kisel sunk back on the straw, laughed and cried, and attempted to whistle, but he was too weak to control the muscles of his lips. By degrees his voice subsided into low moanings, and his eye wandered without light or direction from his mind. The name had produced its effect upon Isabella also. She had been incited to this visit to the prison by Herbert, who had communicated to her

the previous evening some particulars he had received from a sub-keeper in the prison, in relation to this condemned man, which had excited a fear in his (Herbert's) mind that there was some mistake in relation to the culprit. Herbert had not, however, the slightest suspicion that the poor victim was Kisel. One or two particulars of the convict's apparent innocence and simplicity had touched Isabella's heart, and all night she had been disturbed by the impression that he was unjustly condemned. Some young ladies would have rested satisfied with dropping a few pitiful tears over such a mischance; but Isabella Linwood was of another temper; and having no male friend on whom she could rely, she went herself to the prison, and easily obtained access to the prisoner's cell. The moment Kisel pronounced Eliot's name, she was convinced the condemned must be the half-witted attendant of Captain Lee, whom she had often heard Herbert describe; and she doubted not that by going to Sir Henry Clinton and communicating her convictions, she might obtain an order for having him identified by confronting him with Herbert, or at any rate, that she should procure a respite of his sentence. Her carriage was awaiting her; and having communicated her intentions to Rose, she directed her to walk home, saying she should go immediately to Sir Henry's. Rose remonstrated. "What if he be the poor man you think for, Miss Belle? life is nothing to

him—he can do nothing with it—he would not thank you for it."

"But, Rose, the life of an innocent man is sacred."

"La, Miss Belle, they don't stand on such trifles as innocence in war-times—please don't go to Sir Henry's. He won't think the man belonging to Captain Lee alters the case much, and you don't love to be denied, and—I don't love to have you."

Rose was right. Her young mistress did not "love to be denied," but the discipline of events was fast subduing her self-will, and counteracting the indulgence and flattery of her friends. A common nature is not taught by experience, and may therefore be either the tool or victim of circumstances; but a creature like Isabella Linwood, composed of noble elements (if, as with her, these elements are sustained by religious principle), has within herself a self-rectifying and all-controlling power. "Rose little dreams," said she, as the carriage door closed upon her, "how my fondest wishes and expectations have been *denied* and defeated! God grant that the affections thus cast back upon me may not degenerate to morbid sensibility or pining selfishness, but that they may be employed vigorously for the good of my fellow-beings! This poor, harmless, broken creature, if I could but save him!—save him and render Eliot Lee a service—Herbert's friend—poor Bessie's brother—and the preserver of my dear little pet, Lizzy!"

In the midst of these meditations she was shown into Sir Henry's library, where she perceived Jasper Meredith seated at the table, reading, in the identical spot where, a few weeks before, she had received so passionate a declaration from him. A most embarrassing reminiscence of the scene struck them both. He started from the table, and she asked the servant to show her to the drawing-room. "The drawing-room was occupied;" and thus, though the awkwardness of entering was increased tenfold by the effort to avoid it, enter she must.

Seldom have two persons been placed in a more singular position in relation to each other. Their destiny, while it was governed by inflexible principles, seemed to have been at the mercy of the merest accidents. "If," as Meredith had thought a thousand times, while pursuing his retrospections, "if Isabella had not hesitated, and while she hesitated, Helen Ruthven had not broken in upon us, our fate would then have been fixed; or if, on the second occasion, when I urged her decision, she had not again hesitated till her impatient father called her, I should not now be wavering between my inclination and my *better judgment!*"

But Isabella did hesitate, and that hesitation, proceeding from the demands of her pure and lofty nature, was her salvation, and a fatal rebuke and spur to his vanity.

They exchanged the ordinary salutations. Isa-

bella sat down. They were in the same chairs they had occupied at that memorable moment of their lives; the same table was before them—the same books on the table. Feelings have their habits, and so easily revert to their customary channels! A spell seemed to have been cast over them. Neither spoke nor moved, till Isabella, starting as one starts from a thrilling dream, rose and walked to the window. "Ah," thought she, "what memories, hopes, *dreams*, 'poor fancy's followers,' has this place conjured up!"

Jasper, moved by an irresistible impulse, followed her, and was arrested in his half-formed purpose by the vision of Helen Ruthven, who, as she was passing on the opposite side of the street, had seen Isabella come forward, and had vainly tried to catch her eye. She was smiling and bowing. When she saw Meredith, she beckoned. "You had best go to Miss Ruthven," said Isabella; "I have some business with Sir Henry."

"I will go, Miss Linwood," he replied; and adding bitterly, "'the will of man is by his reason swayed,'" he disappeared. Isabella burst into tears. Was ever a woman disinthralled from such a sentiment as Isabella had felt, without efforts repeated and repeated, and many such pangs as she now suffered, secretly endured. The struggle is a hard one—the conquest worth it.

Sir Henry entered. "Your pardon, my dear Miss Isabella. I believed Meredith was here, and

thought you might chance to profit by the blessing promised to those who wait—but you look troubled—your father is not worse, no?—your brother has not abused his liberty?—papa does not frown upon the faithful knight?"

"Oh, no, no—nothing of all this, Sir Henry—I have again come a petitioner to you, but not now in my own cause." Isabella then proceeded to state concisely and eloquently the case of the condemned; Sir Henry became graver as she proceeded; and as she ended, losing a good deal of his habitual courtesy, he said, "Really, Miss Linwood, these are not matters for a young lady to interfere with. The day for voluntary and romantic righters of wrongs is past. This fellow has been adjudged to death after due investigation, before the proper tribunal, and I do not see that it makes any essential difference in his favour even if he should have had the honour of once being in the service of a man who is so fortunate as to be the friend of your brother, and to have rendered an accidental service to your aunt. The poor wretch, as you allow, was one of a band of skinners when captured by a detachment of our soldiers. His comrades were hung last week, and I have already granted a respite to this man for some reason, what I do not precisely recollect, alleged by the proper officer."

"He was ill—unable to stand, when the others suffered."

"Ah, yes—I remember."

Isabella urged her conviction that the prisoner had been accidentally involved with the skinners. She described his simplicity and imbecility of mind, and, as it seemed to her, his utter incapacity to commit the energetic and atrocious crimes perpetrated by a band of desperadoes. But to all her pleadings Sir Henry still returned the answer so satisfactory to an official conscience:—"His death had been decreed by the laws in such cases made and provided."

Isabella said that so slight seemed to be the prisoner's tenure of life, that if he were reprieved for a week, Sir Henry might be relieved from the responsibility of taking a life perhaps not forfeited. But Sir Henry did not shrink from responsibility, and though she still reasoned, and urged, it was all in vain.

He alleged that the press of important affairs rendered it impossible for him to make a personal investigation of the business; and that indeed it was out of the question, occupying the station he did, to attend minutely to such a concern. The truth was, that Sir Henry was somewhat fortified in his present decision by a secret consciousness, that, on a former occasion, he had surrendered a point purely to the influence of a lovely young woman; and he was now resolved to maintain the invincible.

Isabella was obliged to take her leave, having

failed in her errand of mercy, and feeling a just indignation at the carelessness with which a man could make his station an apology for neglecting the rights of his fellow; and struck with the truth, that the only reason for one man's occupying a station more elevated than another, is, that it gives him the opportunity of better protecting and serving his fellow-beings.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"All torment, trouble, wonder, and amazement,
Inhabit here! Some heavenly power guide us
Out of this fearful country."

The hour appointed for Kisel's execution drew nigh. The premonitory bell was already sounding, when a countryman, who had come from the other side of the Hudson, sheltering his little boat in a nook under some cedars growing where Warren-street now terminates, was proceeding towards the city with a market-basket, containing butter, eggs, &c. As he was destined to enact an important part in the drama of that day, it may not be superfluous to describe the homely habiliments in which he appeared. He had on a coarse dark-gray overcoat, a sort of dreadnaught, of domestic manufacture, double-breasted, and fastened with black mohair buttons, as large as dollars, up to his throat; his cravat was a blue and white linen handkerchief—an enduring article, then manufactured by all thrifty housewives; his stockings were blue and white yarn, ribbed; his shoes cowhide, and tied with leather thongs. A *young* man is rarely without a dash of coxcombry, and our humble swain's was betrayed in a fox-skin cap, with straps of the fur

that decorated his cheek, much in the mode of the brush-whisker of our own day. The cap was drawn so close over his brow as nearly to hide his dark pomatumed hair; and finally, his hands were covered by scarlet and white mittens, full fringed, and with his name, *Harmann Van Zandt*, knit in on their backs.

The storm of the morning had passed over. The sun was shining out clear and warm for the season; and as every one is eager to enjoy the last smiles of our stinted autumn, the countryman must have wondered, as he passed the few habitations on his way to the populous part of the town, not to see the usual group—the good man with his pipe, the matron knitting, and the buxom Dutch damsel leaning over the lower portal of the door. As he approached Broadway, however, the sounds of life and busy movement reached his ear, and he saw half a dozen young lads and lasses issue from a house on his left, dressed in their Sunday gear, their faces full of eager expectation, and each hurrying the other.

The good *vrow*, who stood on the door-step, was giving them a last charge to hear every thing and see every thing to tell her; for she "always had to stay at home when any thing *lively* was going on." As she turned from them, her housewife eye fell on the countryman's market-basket. "Stop, neighbour," said she, "and tell us the price of your butter and eggs."

"Butter one dollar the pound, eggs three for a shilling."

"That's the prettiest price asked yet; but—"

"Ay, mother; but live and let live, you know."

"*Let live*, truly. You Bergen people are turning your grass into gold."

"We must make hay while the sun shines."

"While the sun shines! Ah, it does shine as through a knot-hole on a few, but the rest of us are in solid darkness. Go your ways, friend; you'll find lords and generals, admirals, commandants, and jail-keepers, to buy your butter and eggs; honest people must eat their bread without butter now-a-days. The hawks have come over the water to protect the doves, forsooth, and the doves' food, doves and all, are like to be devoured."

This was a sort of figurative railing much indulged in by those who were secretly well-affected to the country's cause, but who were constrained, by motives of prudence, to remain within the British lines.

It seemed to have struck a sympathetic chord in the countryman; for drawing near the good woman, whose exterior expressed very little resemblance to the gentle emblem by which she had chosen to personify herself, he said, kindly smiling, "Bring me a knife, mother, and I'll give you a slice of butter to garnish your tea-table when your comely lasses come home."

"This is kind and neighbourlike," said the wo-

man, hastily bringing the knife and plate; "I thought, the first minute you opened your lips, you were freehearted. This an't the common way of the Bergen people—they sell the cat and her skin too—you have not their tongue, neither—mine is more broken than yours, and I'm only Dutch on the mother's side."

"Ah, mother, trading with gentlefolks, and such fair-spoken people as you, gets the mitten off one's tongue. But I must be going. Can you direct me to Lizzy Bengin's? our Lida wants a pink riband against Christmas."

"Now don't say you come to market, and don't know where Lizzy Bengin lives! Did you never take notice of the little one-story building at the very lower end of Queen-street, with the stoop even with the ground, and plenty of cochinia, and cookey horses, and men and women, in the window, and a parrot hanging outside that beats the world for talking?" The man gave the expected assent, and his informant proceeded—"That is Lizzy's; and without going a step out of your way, you may turn your butter and eggs into silver before you get there. Call at the Provost—Cunningham starves the prisoners, and eats the fat of the land himself—or at Admiral Digby's, who has the young prince William under his roof, and therefore a warrant for the best in the land—or at Tryon's, or Robertson's, or any of the quality; their bread is buttered both sides; but the time is coming—"

"When the bread shall be fairly spread for all. I think so, mother; but I must be going—so good-day."

"Good-day, and good luck to you—a nice youth and a well-spoken is that," said she, looking after him; "and if butter must be a dollar a pound, I'm glad the money finds its way into the pockets of the like of him."

Meanwhile, the subject of her approbation pursued his way, and soon found himself in the midst of a throng, who were hurrying forward to the place of execution. The usual place for military executions was in an apple orchard, where East Broadway now runs; but the condemned having to suffer as one of the infamous band of skinners, was not thought worthy to swing on a gallows devoted to military men. Accordingly, a gallows was erected in a field just above St. Paul's church. Our friend of the butter and eggs found himself, on reaching Broadway, retarded and encompassed by the crowd. "Hold your basket up, fellow, and let me pass," said a gentleman, who seemed eager to get beyond the crowd. The countryman obeyed, but turned his back upon the speaker, as if from involuntary resentment at his authoritative tone.

"Whither are you hastening, Meredith?" asked another voice.

"Ah, St. Clair, how are you? I am trying to get through this abominable crowd to join my mother and Lady Anne, who have gone to take a drive:

my servant is waiting with my horse beyond the barracks."

"Your mother, Lady Anne, and Miss *Linwood!*" An opening now before the countryman would have allowed him to pass on, but he did not move. "Upon my honour, St. Clair, I did not know that Miss Linwood was with them. They talked of asking Helen Ruthven."

"And so they did. Lady Anne sent me to her, but Miss Ruthven said, not very civilly I think, she had no inclination for a drive, and begged me to stop while she wrote you this note."

Meredith opened the note, sealed with an anchor, and containing only these two lines, exquisitely written in pencil:—"Could I endure any thing called pleasure on the same day with my *tête-à-tête* walk with you this morning? Oh, no—there is no next best.—H. R."

"You seem pleased, Meredith," resumed St. Clair, as he saw Meredith's eye kindle and his cheek brighten. Meredith made no reply, but thrust the note into his pocket. He was pleased. He felt much like a musician, whose ears have been tormented by discords, when the keys are rightly struck. "Lady Anne had hard work," continued St. Clair, "to persuade Miss Linwood to go with her. It seems she has got up her nerves for this poor devil of a skinner. Lady Anne persuaded her at last; indeed, I believe she was glad to get beyond the tolling of the bell till the rumpus is over."

"Women are riddles," thought Meredith; "they feel without reason, and will not feel when reason bids them." He had lost his desire to go alone to join the ladies; and he offered St. Clair his horse, saying he would himself ride his servant's. St. Clair eagerly accepted his courtesy, and the two gentlemen elbowed their way through the crowd. The countryman turned to gaze after them; and while his eye followed Meredith with its keenest glance, the wave of the multitude had set towards him, and so completely hedged his way in front, that, not being able to proceed, he thought best to retreat a few yards to where the crowd was less dense, and wait till the pressure was past, which must be soon, as the procession with the prisoner had already moved from the Provost. In the meanwhile he secured the occupation of a slightly elevated platform, an entrance to a house, where, setting down his basket, he folded his arms, and while detained, had the benefit of the various remarks of the passers-by.

"What a disgrace it is," said a British subaltern to his companion, "that those rebels," pointing to some American officers, prisoners on parole, "are permitted to walk the streets in uniform. It is too annoying—I hate the sight of them."

"Yes," retorted his companion, laughing, "and so you have ever since they distanced you skating on the Kolch last winter."

"A crying shame is it," said an honest burgher

to a fellow-vestryman, "that a human creature is going to his doom, and but one bell tolling. But the Lord's temples are turned aside from all holy uses—our own sanctuary is a prison for soldiers, and the Middle Dutch a riding-school!"

"A soul's a soul," returned his companion; "but the lordly English bells may not toll for the parting of this poor wretch's; only the tinkling bell of the Methodist Chapel, that's kept open, forsooth, because John Wesley and his followers are loyal.'

"We shall have our pains for our trouble," said a fellow, who seemed to have come to the spectacle *en amateur:* "the boys say he never will stand it to get to the gallows."

"Move on—move on," cried a voice that heralded the procession; and the crowd was driven forward, in order to leave an open space around the prisoner and his assistants.

It is impossible for a benevolent man to look on a fellow-creature about to suffer a violent death (be his doom ever so well merited), without a feeling of intense interest. The days of the culprits' youth, of his innocence, of his parents' love and hope; the tremendous present, and the possible future, all rush upon the mind. It would appear that our country friend was a man of reflection and sentiment; for, as he gazed at the prisoner, his cheek was blanched, his brow contracted, and the exclamation, "Oh, God! oh, God!" burst from lips that never lightly uttered that holy name.

Poor Kisel appeared as if nature would fain save him from the executioner's touch. His head had fallen on his bosom, his knees were bent and trembling, and his step as wavering and uncertain as that of a blind man. He was supported and helped forward by a stout man on his right. When he was within a few feet of the countryman, a ray of consciousness seemed to shoot athwart his mind. He raised his head, shook back his shaggy locks, cast a wild inquiring glance around him, when his eye encountering the stranger, he seemed electrified, his joints to be reset, his nerves restrung. He drew up his person, uttered a piercing shriek, sprang forward like a cat, and, sinking at his feet, sobbed out, "Misser Eliot, hey!"

The multitude were for an instant palsied; not a sound—not a breath escaped them: and then a rush, and a shout, and cries of "Seize him!" and shrieks from those who were trodden under foot.

"Stand back—back—back, monsters!" cried Eliot, himself almost wild with amazement and grief—"give him air, space, breath, he is dying!" He raised Kisel's head, and rested it on his breast, and bent his face over him, murmuring, "Kisel, my poor fellow!"

Kisel's eye, gleaming with preternatural joy, was riveted to Eliot's face. A slight convulsion passed over his frame; drops of sweat, like rain, gushed from every pore; and, while his quivering, half-smiling lips murmured inaudibly, "Misser

Eliot!—Misser Eliot!" they stiffened, his eyes rolled up, and his released, exulting spirit fled.

Eliot was but for one instant unmanned; but for one instant did he lose the self-possession on which even at this moment of consternation he was conscious that much more than his own individual safety depended. He made no effort to escape from observation; that would have excited suspicion; but said, calmly, still supporting Kisel's head, "The poor man, I think, is gone; is there not some physician here who can tell whether he be or not?" A doctor was called for; and, while one was bustling through the crowd, there were various conjectures, surmises, and assertions. Some said "he looked as good as dead when he came out of the prison;" some asked "if he could have hoped to have got away;" and others believed that the excitement of the scene had maddened his brain. Eliot said he had fallen at his feet like a spent ball; and, while he was internally blessing God that his poor follower had escaped all farther suffering, the medical man announced, with the authority of his art, that life was extinct. The body was conveyed to the prison for interment. The crowd dispersed; and Eliot, feeling that Heaven had conferred its best boon on Kisel, and extended a shield over him, pursued his way to Lizzy Bengin's shop.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Les revers de la verité a cent milles figures, et un champ indefiny,
Les Pythagoriens font le bien certain et finy, le mal incertain et infiny." MONTAIGNE.

WHILE the circumstances related above were in action, the ladies in their drive had stopped at an opening to the Hudson, where the shore was shelving and indented with a footpath, on which the full mellow rays of the afternoon sun shone. And who would not pause to gaze at the noble Hudson, which, coming from its source in distant mountains, infolds in its arms the city it has created, wears on its bosom its little emerald island-gems, reposes in the bay, and then finishes its course through the portal of the Narrows?

The river is now precisely what it then was, for "man's hand cannot make a mark upon the waters;" but on its shores what changes has that marvellous instrument wrought! Where nature sat, like a hermit, amid the magnificence of her solitary domain, are now bustling cities, fortified islands, wharves and warehouses, manufactories, stately mansions, ornamented pleasure-grounds, and citizens' cottages, and the parent city extending up and branching out in every direction, from the

narrow space it then occupied, covering with its thronged streets the wooded heights and bosky dells, now, alas! reduced from the aristocracy of nature to one uniform level. Then the city's tributary waters bore on their surface a few fishing-skiffs, and some two or three British men of-war. Now see the signals of population, enterprise, and commercial prosperity: schooners from our own eastern and southern ports, neatly rigged vessels from a hundred river-harbours, mammoth steamers bringing in and carrying out their hundreds at every hour of the day, ferry-boats scudding to and fro, sail-boats dancing over the waves, row-boats darting out and in, hither and yon, packets taking their semiweekly departure for England and France, ships with the star-spangled banner floating from the masthead, and rich freighted argosies from all parts of each quarter of the globe. What a change!

Lady Anne heard the trampling of horses, and put her head out of the coach window. A blush suffused her sunny face at the recollection of her parting with Meredith in the morning. Her embarrassment was as transient as the suffusion. "Ah, cousin Jasper," she said, "you have come at last; I have been waiting impatiently, sitting here, like a dutiful niece (as I am), because aunt has heard bugbear stories about American rattlesnakes, and absolutely forbade my strolling along the shore with Isabella. You will not be afraid, aunt, if the gentlemen are with me?"

"Not in the least, my love; indeed, I will alight myself if Major St. Clair will give an old lady his arm."

"She understands tactics," thought St. Clair; "she will defile with me, and leave Jasper to a *tête-à-tête* on vantage-ground!" He however bowed *en militaire*, and gave Mrs. Meredith his arm; and she, as he had foreseen, led him off in an opposite direction from that which Lady Anne had taken.

Isabella had before alighted, and left her com panion, on the pretext of looking for an autumnal flower that she knew grew on the river's bank; but really, that she might, in the freedom of solitude, and in the calm of a sweet country walk, indulge her sad reflections. Isabella had learned to master herself in great trials; but she had not yet learned that far more difficult lesson, to be patient and serene under small annoyances. She was vexed and wearied with Mrs. Meredith's pompous talk and commonplace and hollow sentiment, and somewhat disturbed by Lady Anne's kind-hearted, but too manifest efforts, to divert her thoughts from the tragedy enacting in the city, to which she had imputed all the sadness that might have been in part ascribed to another cause.

Lady Anne had no enthusiasm for scenery. She had never lived in the country, never been trained in nature's school, nor a guest at her perpetual and sweetest banquet; but she had youthful spirits

stirred to joyousness by a ride, or a walk, or any other exciting cause; and she laughed, rattled, and bounded on, wondered where Isabella could be, and at last, quite out of breath, sat down on a grassy bank by a very high rock, around which the pass was narrow and difficult. "I will not venture that," said she, pointing to the path. "You may go for Isabella, Jasper, and I will wait here for you."

"Thank you, sweet coz; but I prefer staying here too, if you will permit me."

"You may as well, I fancy. Isabella is rather *penseroso* this afternoon; and as she very faintly seconded my entreaties to aunt that I might go with her, I think she prefers *la solitaire*. To tell you the truth, Jasper, she is horribly blue to-day, though I would not own it to aunt."

"And why not?"

"Oh, you know she is no favourite with aunt; and when we really love a person, as I do really and fervently Isabella Linwood, we are not fond of speaking of their faults to those who do not like them."

"Then perhaps you think she is a favourite of mine?"

"Certainly I do—is she not?"

"She *was*."

With what different import do the same words fall on different ears. This "she was" hardly reached Lady Anne's sensorium. Her thoughts

were weighing something more important than any of Meredith's words could be to her. Meredith's heart throbbed as he pronounced them. Uttered to Lady Anne, they seemed to him to cut the gordian knot that bound him to Isabella. There was another unseen, unwilling, and involuntary auditor, who, as on the other side of the rock she leaned breathless against it, proudly responded from the depths of her soul "she *was*—it is past —a finished dream to us both!"

"How very nice these little scarlet berries are," said Lady Anne, picking some berries from their evergreen leaves.

"Very nice."

"This is a lovely river, Jasper. How I should like a nice cottage on this very spot."

"And when your imagination builds the cottage, coz, is there no one permitted to share it with you?"

Lady Anne picked the leaves from the stem in her hand, strewed them around, and laughing and blushing, said, "that absolute solitude in a cottage would be just as stupid as in a palace."

"On this hint shall I—*can* I speak?" thought Meredith.

"Formerly, when I built castles in the air," continued Lady Anne, engrossed in her own sweet fancies, and not dreaming of the interpretation Meredith's deluded vanity was giving to her words, "I always put wings to them, and would lodge

them in London, Paris, or Italy, as suited the humour of the moment—now I make them fixtures in America."

Meredith felt somewhat like the sportsman, who, accustomed to the keen pursuit of game that incites and eludes him, cares not for the silly prey that runs into his toils. "Heigh-ho!" resumed Lady Anne, awaking from a revery after a short pause; "it is time we returned—the sun is setting—you are very stupid, Jasper—you have not spoken three words."

"My dear cousin, there are moments when it is far more agreeable to look, and to listen, than to speak."

"But then, sir, you should look 'unutterable things.'"

"We may feel them without looking or speaking them—do not go now—there are few delicious moments in life—why not prolong them?"

"You talk limpingly, Jasper, like one who has conned a task, and recites it but half learned; there should be a *vraisemblance* in compliments."

"On my honour!"

"Oh, never swear to them; these are like beggars' oaths, nobody believes them." Lady Anne was already on the wing. "Bless us," thought Meredith, "a little dash of coquetry might make her quite charming;" and springing after her, he gave her his arm. When they met his mother at the roadside, his face and air were so changed and so

animated, that, in the flush of her hopes, she ventured to whisper to him—

> "'Not Hermia, but Helena I love
> Who would not change a raven for a dove?'"

He smiled assentingly, and his mother was perfectly happy.

"Where is Isabella?" and "Where is Miss Linwood?" "I thought she was on your side," and "I thought she was on yours," was asked and reiterated, and answered by the person in question appearing. She had left the shore, scrambled through the wood, and come into the road in advance of her party. They rallied her on her preference of solitude, and she them (for she had regained her self-command), on the willing forbearance with which they had permitted her to enjoy it. Mrs. Meredith, of course, first entered the carriage; and while the young ladies were getting in, putting on their cloaks, etc., she wrote on a card and gave to her son the following hint from Metastasio:—

> "E folle quel nocchièro
> Che cerca un' altra stella,
> E non si fida a quella
> Che in porto lo guidó."

"My sage mother is this sure star, by whose directing 'light I am to pilot my bark,'" thought Meredith, as he read the pencilled words—"well, be it so."

Mrs. Meredith's carriage stopped at Mrs. Lin-

wood's door. Isabella alighted, and Lady Anne was following her, when her aunt interposed.—"My dear child," she said, "I particularly wish you to go home with me this evening."

"I would, aunt—but—but I have promised Mr. Linwood—"

"I appeal to your generosity, Miss Linwood; I have not your passion for solitude, and I am quite wretched without Lady Anne."

Lady Anne's back was to her aunt; and she turned up her eyes imploringly to Isabella, who consequently resolutely professed herself afraid to encounter her father if she should resign Lady Anne. Lady Anne finished the parley by springing from the carriage, and promising her aunt to be at home an hour earlier than usual. Mrs. Meredith, vexed, puzzled, and disconcerted, drove home.

The young ladies were met at the door by Rose, with a message from Mrs. Archer, requesting Isabella, without a moment's delay, to come to her house. "Make my excuses to papa," said Isabella to Lady Anne, "and enact the good daughter till I return."

"Yes, that I will," said Lady Anne; "and the good daughter would I be in reality all my life to him," she thought; "but Herbert Linwood will not, in his forlorn circumstances, declare his love for me if he feels it; and I, like all the rest of my sex, must keep the secret of my pure love as if it

were a crime." Whether the open-hearted girl's eyes and cheeks would betray the secret which the austere proprieties of her sex forbade her to tell, and whether on this hint Linwood would be imboldened to speak, was soon put to the proof; for one hour after, arriving on his evening visit, Rose conducted him into the breakfast-room, informing him that he must wait till a person who was with his father on business should be gone. Rose, sagaciously divining her young master's inclinations, then went to Lady Anne and whispered—"Mr. Herbert is in the breakfast-parlour; and do, miss, happen in there; poor boy, he has enough of his own company in prison."

Lady Anne did not wait for the request to be repeated. She went, nor did she and Herbert appear in Mr. Linwood's room till after a repeated, and finally very impatient summons from him; and then they entered, and kneeling together at his feet, asked his blessing on their plighted loves.

He did not speak for half a minute, and then laughing, while the tears gushed from his eyes, "God bless you, my children!" he said—"God bless you!—kiss me, my dear little girl—this has been pretty quickly hatched, though; but I don't wonder; I loved you the first minute I saw you."

"And I, like a good son, dutifully followed my father's example."

"*Vous n'avez fait que votre devoir filial; fort bien, monsieur!*" said Lady Anne, archly.

"My dear child!" interposed Mr. Linwood, "now you are going really to be my child, don't torment me with interlarding your English with French. There's nothing I detest like cutting up a plain English road with these French ditches. It's a slipshod tongue, good enough for those that are born to *parlez-vous* and gabble all their lives; but English, my dear, is for men of sense and true-hearted girls like you, that speak what they mean."

Lady Anne promised to cure herself of a habit into which she had unconsciously fallen; and a pause followed, which gave Mr. Linwood time for a reflection that clouded his brow.

"This won't do, Herbert," he said; "I forgot myself entirely, and so have you. What business have you to be making love, and stealing away this dear little generous girl's heart—you, a proscribed man—holding your life by sufferance—disgraced."

"Not *disgraced*, sir!"

"Oh, no! dear Mr. Linwood, not disgraced."

"Well, well, 'tis a devilish ugly word to bestow on one's own flesh and blood. But, my dear girl, we must look truth in the face. Your aunt is a woman of the world; she will accuse us; and she may very well suspect us of conniving at this business—you have fortune—we are poor." The proud old man's blood mounted to his face—"No, no; it must not be. I take back my consent."

Herbert's face expressed the conflict of his love with his sense of rectitude—the last prevailed. "My father is right," he said; "and I, headlong as usual, have done just what I ought not to do."

"You're right now, anyhow, my boy; you show blood—go up to the mark, though a lion—" A glance at poor Lady Anne, leaning on the side of his easy-chair, with tearful eyes, mended his sentence—"I should say, though an *angel* were in the way."

"I have been far enough from the mark, sir; I should have remembered in time that I was in the enemy's talons; and, what is far worse, under the censure of my own general."

"As to that Herbert, as to that—"

"Be kind enough to hear me out, sir. I should have remembered that I was penniless; that Lady Anne is very young, careless for herself, and an *heiress;* but how could I think of any thing," he added, taking her hand, and pressing it to his heart, "when I heard her generous, bewildering confession, that she loved me—but that I loved her with my whole soul?"

"It's—it's—it's hard; but you must come to it, my children. You must just set to work and undo what has been done; you must forget one another."

"Forget! dear Mr. Linwood! Herbert may forget; for I think it seems very easy to him to recede—"

"Anne!"

"Forgive me, Herbert; but really you and your father place me in such an awkward position. Give you up, I will not; forget you, I cannot. I cannot extinguish my memory; and there is no thought in it, waking or sleeping, but what concerns you. I know it is very shocking and improper to say this before you, Mr. Linwood, but it is true."

"I love truth, my child—such truth—God knows I do, too well."

"Then sir," she continued, smiling archly through her tears, "let me go on and speak a little more of it." Her voice faltered. "I wish Isabella were here—any woman would feel for me."

"God bless me, child, don't I feel for you—look at Herbert, the calf—don't he feel for you?"

"Herbert says I am so very young. I am sure seventeen and past has years and *wisdom* enough for *not quite* two-and-twenty. He says I am careless for myself; if I were as calculating as my aunt Meredith, what could I do better for myself than to supply the cruel deficiencies of my lot? than to provide for myself the kindest and best of fathers and mothers, and a sister that has not her peer in the wide world? Herbert says I am an heiress—I am so; but what is fortune to me, if I may not select the object with whom to share it? If I am not two-and-twenty—" she cast an arch glance at Herbert, "I have lived long enough to see that fortune alone is perfectly impotent. It does not

create friends, nor inspire goodness, nor secure happiness; but when it comes as an accessory to a happy home, to love, and health, and liberal hearts; ah, then it is indeed a boon from Heaven! Am I not right, Mr. Linwood?"

"Yes, by Jupiter, you are! Your views could not be juster if you were as old as Methuselah, and as wise as Solomon. But, my dear, we must come back to the point—what is very right for you, and noble, would be very wrong for us. The Linwoods have always had a fair name, and now, when every thing else is gone, they must hold fast to that. Oh, Herbert, if you had only stuck to your king, all would be well; but I won't reproach you now—no, no, poor boy! I never felt so much like forgiving you for that d—d blunder."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, sir, say you forgive me—let that account be settled."

"I will—I do forgive you, my son; but it's the devil and all to forget!" Herbert grasped the hand his father extended to him. There was a silence of a few moments, broken by Mr. Linwood saying, "It's tough to come to it, my children; but this must be the last evening you meet."

"Lady Anne," said Rose, opening the door, "Mrs. Meredith's carriage is waiting for you."

"Let it wait, Rose."

"But the footman bade me tell you, my lady, that your aunt is ill, and begs you will come home immediately."

"Then I must go," said the poor girl, bursting into tears, all her natural buoyancy and courageous cheerfulness forsaking her at the foreboding that this might be a final separation. Mr. Linwood hemmed, wiped his spectacles, put them on, threw them down on the table, stirred the fire, knocked down shovel, tongs, and fender, and cursed them all; while Lady Anne retired with Herbert to the farthest part of the room, to exchange words that can never be appreciated rightly but by the parties, and therefore must not be repeated. They verily believed that mortals had never been so happy—never so wretched as they.

Once there was a reaction in Lady Anne's mind. She started from Herbert, and appealing to his father, said—"Think once more of it, Mr. Linwood; why should you heed what my aunt or any one else may impute to you? We have all felt and acted right, naturally, and honestly. I cannot, for my life I cannot, see why we should sacrifice ourselves to their false judgments."

Mr. Linwood shook his head. "It cannot be," said Herbert; "we must cast ourselves upon the future; if," he added, lowering his voice, "it should please Heaven to permit me to regain my freedom, if—but I am wrong—I must not cherish these hopes. Years may pass away before the war ends; and in the meantime, you may bless another with that love which—"

"Never end that sentence, Herbert Linwood.

You may take back your own vows—you cannot give me back mine—I will not receive them. My love will not depend on your freedom, your name with friend or foe: it will not be touched by circumstance, or time, or absence. Farewell, Herbert."

One fond embrace she permitted—the first—*was it the last?*

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung,
With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;
And stolen the impression of her fantasy,
With bracelets of thy hair—rings, gawds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
Of strong prevailment in unhardened youth."

It will be remembered that Isabella, at her aunt's summons, had gone to her house. She met Mrs. Archer at her street door. Her face spoke of startling intelligence before she uttered it. "My dear Belle," she said, "I have the strangest news for you. I went to your father's while you were out; and just as my foot was on your door-step, a man drove up in a wagon with a girl as pale as death—such a face! The moment he stopped she sprang from the wagon. At once I knew her, and exclaimed, 'Bessie Lee!'"

"Bessie Lee! Gracious Heaven!"

"Yes; she asked eagerly if you were at home. I perceived the inconvenience—the impossibility of your taking care of her in the present state of your family. I felt anxious to do any thing and every thing for the sister of young Lee; I therefore told her you were not at home, but she could

see you at my house; and I persuaded her to come home with me."

"Dear Bessie! can it be possible that she is here?"

"Yes, I have left her in that room. Her attendant told me that she arrived this morning at Kingsbridge, with a decent man and woman, who had passports from La Fayette, and a letter from him to the commander of that post, commending the unfortunate person to his humanity, and entreating him to convey her, under a proper escort, to Mr. Linwood's."

"Poor Bessie! Heaven has miraculously guided her into the best hands. How does she appear?"

"With scarcely enough of mortality to shield her troubled spirit; fluttering and gentle as a stricken dove—pale, unnaturally, deadly pale—a startling brightness in her deep blue eye—her cheeks sunken; but still her features preserve the exquisite symmetry we used to think so beautiful, when a pensive, quiet little girl, she stole round after you like a shadow. And her voice, oh Belle, you cannot hear it without tears. She is mild and submissive; but restless, and excessively impatient to see you and Jasper Meredith. Twice she has come to the door to go out in search of him. I have ordered the blinds closed, and the candles lighted, to make it appear darker without than it really is. I could only quiet her by the assurance that I would send for him immediately."

"Have you done so?"

"No; I have waited to consult you."

The house Mrs. Archer occupied was of the common construction of the best houses of that day, being double, the two front apartments separated by a wide hall, a drawing-room in the rear, and a narrow cross-passage opening into a carriage-way to the yard. A few moments before Isabella arrived, a person had knocked at the door and asked to see Mrs. Archer; and being told that she was particularly engaged, he asked to be shown to a room where he might await her convenience, as he had business of importance with her. He was accordingly shown into an apartment opposite to that occupied at the moment by Mrs. Archer and Bessie.

There he found the blind children, Ned and Lizzy, so absorbed in a game of chess, that although he went near them, and overlooked them, they seemed just conscious of his presence, but not in the least disturbed by it. They went on playing and managing their game with almost as much facility as if they had their eyesight, till after a closely-fought battle Lizzy declared a checkmate. Ned (only not superior to all the chess-players we have ever seen) was nettled by his unexpected defeat, and gave vent to his vexation by saying, "Anyhow, Miss Lizzy, you would not have beaten if I had not thought it was my knight, instead of yours, on number four."

"Oh, Ned!"

"You would not; you know I always get puzzled about the knights—I always said it was the only fault in the chessmen—I always said I wished Captain Lee had made them more different."

"That fault is easily rectified," said the looker-on.

"Captain Lee!" exclaimed Ned, whose memory was true to a voice once heard, and who never, in any circumstances, could have forgotten the sound of Eliot's voice.

"Hush, my dear little fellow, for Heaven's sake, hush!" cried Eliot, aware of the imprudence he had committed; but it was too late.

Ned's feelings were as susceptible as his hearing. He impetuously sprang forward, and opening the door into the entry, where Mrs. Archer had just uttered the last sentence we reported of her conversation with Isabella, he cried out, "Oh, mamma, Captain Lee is here!"

Eliot involuntarily doffed his fox-skin cap, and advanced to them. Both ladies most cordially gave him their hands at the same moment, while their brows clouded with the thoughts of the sad tidings they had to communicate. Conscious of the precarious position he occupied, he naturally interpreted the concern so evident on their faces as the expression of a benevolent interest in his safety. "Do not be alarmed, ladies," he said; "I have nothing to fear if my little friends here be quiet; and that I am certain they will be, when they know my life depends on my remaining unknown."

"Oh, what have I done?" exclaimed Ned, bursting into tears; but he was soon soothed by Eliot's assurances that no harm as yet was done.

Mrs. Archer withdrew the children, while Miss Linwood communicated to Eliot, as briefly as possible, the arrival and condition of his sister; and he, rather relieved than distressed by the information, told her that his deepest interest in coming to the city was the hope of obtaining some tidings of the poor wanderer. They then consulted how and when they had best present themselves before her; and it was decided that Miss Linwood should first go into the apartment, and prepare her to see Eliot.

Eliot retreated, and stood still and breathless to catch the first sound of Bessie's voice; but he heard nothing but the exclamation, "She is not here!" Eliot sprang forward. The door of the apartment which led into the side passage and the outer door were both open, and Eliot, forgetful of every thing but his sister, was rushing into the street, when Bessie entered the street door with Jasper Meredith! Impelled by her ruling purpose to see Meredith, she had, on her first discovery of the side passage, escaped into the street, where the first person she encountered was he whose image had so long been present to her, that seeing him with her bodily organ seemed to make no new impression, nor even to increase the vividness of the image stamped on her memory. She had thrown on her cloak, but had nothing on her head;

and her hair fell in its natural fair curls over her face and neck. Singular as it was for the delicate, timid Bessie to appear in this guise in the public street, or to appear there at all, and much as he was startled by her faded, stricken form, the truth did not at once occur to Meredith. The wildness of her eye was subdued in the dim twilight; she spoke in her accustomed quiet manner; and after answering to his first inquiry that she was perfectly well *now*, she begged him to go into Mrs. Archer's with her, as she had something there to restore to him. He endeavoured to put her off with a commonplace evasion—" he was engaged now, would come some other time," &c., but she was not to be eluded; and seeing some acquaintances approaching, whose observation he did not care to encounter, he ascended Mrs. Archer's steps, and found himself in the presence of those whom he would have wished most to avoid; but there was no retreat.

Bessie now acted with an irresistible energy. " This way," said she, leading Meredith into the room she had quitted—" come all of you in here," glancing her eye from Meredith to Isabella and Eliot, but without manifesting the slightest surprise or emotion of any sort at seeing them, but simply saying, with a smile of satisfaction, as she shut the door and threw off her cloak, " I expected this—I *knew* it would be so. In visions by day, and dreams by night, I always saw you together."

It was a minute before Eliot could command his voice for utterance. He folded his arms around Bessie, and murmured, "My sister!—my dear sister!"

She drew back, and placing her hands on his shoulders and smiling, said, "Tears, Eliot, tears! Oh, shame, when this is the proudest, happiest moment of your sister's life!"

"Is she mad?" asked Meredith of Isabella.

Bessie's ear caught his last word. "Mad!" she repeated—"I think all the world is mad; but I alone am not! I have heard that whom the gods would destroy they first make mad; men and angels have been employed to save me from destruction."

"It is idle to stay here to listen to these ravings," said Meredith, in a low voice, to Miss Linwood; and he was about to make his escape, when Isabella interposed: "Stay for a moment, I entreat you," she said; "she has been very eager to see you, and it is sometimes of use to gratify these humours."

In the meantime Eliot, his heart burning within him at his sister's being gazed at as a spectacle by that man of all the world from whose eye he would have sheltered her, was persuading her, as he would a wayward child, to leave the apartment. She resisted his importunities with a sort of gentle pity for his blindness, and a perfect assurance that she was guided by light from Heaven. "Dear Eliot," she said, "you know not what you ask of

me. For this hour my life has been prolonged, my strength miraculously sustained. You have all been assembled here—you, Eliot, because a brother should sustain his sister, share her honour, and partake her happiness; Jasper Meredith to receive back those charms and spells by which my too willing spirit was bound; and you, Isabella Linwood, to see how, in my better mind, I yield him to you."

She took from her bosom a small ivory box, and opening it, she said, advancing to Meredith, and showing him a withered rose-bud, "Do you remember this? You plucked it from a little bush that almost dipped its leaves in that cold spring on the hill-side—do you remember? It was a hot summer's afternoon, and you had been reading poetry to me; you said there was a delicate praise in the sweet breath of flowers that suited me, and some silly thing you said, Jasper, that you should not, of wishing yourself a flower that you might breathe the incense that you were not at liberty to speak; and then you taught me the Persian language of flowers. I kept this little bud: it faded, but was still sweet. Alas!—alas! I cherished it for its Persian meaning." Her reminiscence seemed too vivid, her voice faltered, and her eye fell from its fixed gaze on Meredith; but suddenly her countenance brightened, and she turned to Isabella, who stood by the mantelpiece resting her throbbing head on her hand, and added, "Take it, Isabella, it is a true symbol to you."

Eliot for the first time turned his eye from his sister, and even at that moment of anguish a thrill of joy shot through every vein when he saw Isabella take the bud, pull apart its shrivelled leaves, and throw them from her. Meredith stood leaning against the wall, his arms folded, and his lips curled into a smile that was intended to express scornful unconcern. He might have expressed it, he might possibly have felt it towards Bessie Lee; but when he saw Isabella throw away the bud, when he met the indignant glance of her eye flashing through the tears that suffused it, a livid paleness spread around his mouth, and that feature, the most expressive and truest organ of the soul, betrayed his inward conflict. He snatched his hat to leave the room; Bessie laid her hand on his arm: "Oh, do not go; I shall be cast back into my former wretchedness if you go now."

"Stay, sir," said Eliot; "my sister shall not be crossed"

"With all my heart; I have not the slightest objection to playing out my dumb show between vapouring and craziness."

"Villain!" exclaimed Eliot—the young men exchanged glances of fire Bessie placed herself between them, and stretching out her arms, laid a hand on the breast of each, as if to keep them apart. —"Now this is unkind—unkind in both of you. I have come such a long and wearisome journey to make peace for all of us; and if you will but let

me finish my task, I shall lay me down and sleep —for ever, I think."

Eliot pressed her burning hand to his lips. "My poor, dear sister," he said, "I will not speak another word, if I die in the effort to keep silence."

"Thanks, dear Eliot," she replied; and putting both her arms around his neck, she added, in a whisper, "do not be angry if he again call me crazy; there be many that have called me so—they mistake inspiration for madness, you know." Never was Eliot's self-command so tested; and retiring to the farthest part of the room, he stood with knit brows and compressed lips, looking and feeling like a man stretched on the rack, while Bessie pursued her fancied mission. "Do you remember this chain?" she asked, as she opened a bit of paper, and let fall a gold chain over Meredith's arm. He started as if he were stung. "It cannot harm you," she said, faintly smiling, as she noticed his recoiling. "This was the charm." She smoothed the paper envelope. "As often as I looked at it, the feeling with which I first read it shot through my heart—strange, for there does not seem much in it." She murmured the words pencilled by Meredith on the envelope,

"'Can she who weaves electric chains to bind the heart,
Refuse the golden links that boast no mystic art?'

"Oh, well do I remember," she cast up her eyes as one does who is retracing the past, "the night

you gave me this; Eliot was in Boston; mother was—I don't remember where, and we had been all the evening sitting on the porch. The honeysuckles and white roses were in bloom, and the moon shone in through their leaves. It was then you first spoke of your mother in England, and you said much of the happy destiny of those who were not shackled by pride and avarice; and when you went away, you pressed my hand to your heart, and put this little packet in it. Yet" (turning to Isabella) "he never *said* he loved me. It was only my over-credulous fancy. Take it, Isabella; it belongs to you, who really weave the chain that binds the heart."

Meredith seized the chain as she stretched out her hand, and crushed it under his foot. Bessie looked from him to Isabella, and seemed for a moment puzzled; then said, acquiescingly, "Ah, it's all well; symbols do not make nor change realities. This little brooch," she continued, steadily pursuing her purpose, and taking from the box an old-fashioned brooch, in the shape of a forget-me-not, "I think was powerless. What need had I of a forget-me-not, when memory devoured every faculty of my being? No, there was no charm in the forget-me-not; but oh, this little pencil," she took from the box the end of a lead pencil, "with which we copied and scribbled poetry together. How many thoughts has this little instrument unlocked—what feelings has it touched—what affec-

tions have hovered over its point, and gone thrilling back through the heart! You must certainly take this, Isabella, for there is yet a wonderful power in this magical little pencil—it can make such revelations."

"Dear Bessie, I have no revelations to make."

"Is my task finished?" asked Meredith.

"Not yet—not quite yet—be patient—patience is a great help; I have found it so. Do you remember this?" She held up before Meredith a tress of her own fair hair, tied with a raven lock of his in a true-love knot. "Ah, Isabella, I know very well it was not maidenly of me to tie this; I knew it then, and I begged it of him with many tears, did I not, Jasper? but I *kept* it—that was wrong too. Now, Mr. Meredith, you will help me to untie it?"

"Pardon me; I have no skill in such matters."

"Ah, is it easier to tie than to untie a true-love knot? Alas, alas! I have found it so. But you must help me. My head is growing dizzy, and I am so faint here!" She laid her hand on her heart. "It must be parted—dear Isabella, you will help me—you can untie a true-love's knot?"

"I can sever it," said Isabella, with an emphasis that went to the heart of more than one that heard her. She took a pair of scissors from the table, and cut the knot. The black lock fell on the floor; the pretty tress of Bessie's hair curled around her finger:—"I will keep this for ever, my sweet

Bessie," she said; "the memorial of innocence, and purity, and much-abused trust."

"Oh, I did not mean that—I did not mean that, Isabella. Surely I have not accused him; I told you he never *said* he loved me. I am not angry with him—you must not be. You cannot be long, if you love him; and surely you do love him."

"Indeed, indeed I do not."

"Isabella Linwood! you *have* loved him." She threw one arm around Isabella's neck, and looked with a piercing gaze in her face. Isabella would at this moment have given worlds to have answered with truth—"No, *never!*" She would have given her life to have repressed the treacherous blood, that, rushing to her neck, cheeks, and temples, answered unequivocally Bessie's ill-timed question.

Meredith's eye was riveted to her face, and the transition from the humiliation, the utter abasement of the moment before, to the undeniable and manifested certainty that he had been loved by the all-exacting, the unattainable Isabella Linwood, was more than he could bear, without expressing his exultation. "I thank you, Bessie Lee," he cried; "this triumph is worth all I have endured from your raving and silly drivelling. Your silent confession, Miss Linwood, is *satisfactory*, full, and plain enough; but it has come a thought too late. Good-evening to you—a fair good-night to you, sir. I advise you to take care that your sister sleep more and *dream* less."

There is undoubtedly a pleasure, transient it may be, but real it is, in the gratification of the baser passions. Meredith was a self-idolater; and at the very moment when his divinity was prostrate, it had been revived by the sweetest, the most unexpected incense. No wonder he was intoxicated. How long his delirium lasted, and what were its effects, are still to be seen. His parting taunt was lost on those he left behind.

Bessie believed that her mission was fulfilled and ended. The artificial strength which, while she received it as the direct gift of Heaven, her highly-wrought imagination had supplied, was exhausted. As Meredith closed the door, she turned to Eliot, and locking her arms around him, gazed at him with an expression of natural tenderness, that can only be imagined by those who have been so fortunate as to see Fanny Kemble's exquisite personation of Ophelia; and who remember (who could forget it?) her action at the end of the flower-scene, when reason and nature seeming to overpower her wild fancies, she throws her arms around Laertes's neck, and with one flash of her all-speaking eyes, makes every chord of the heart vibrate.

The light soon faded from Bessie's face, and she lay as helpless as an infant in her brother's arms. Isabella hastened to Mrs. Archer; and Eliot, left alone and quite unmanned, poured out his heart over this victim of vanity and heartlessness.

Mrs. Archer was prompt and efficient in her

kindness. Bessie was conveyed to bed, and Eliot assured that every thing should be done for her that human tenderness and vigilance could do. After obtaining a promise from Mrs. Archer that she would write a letter to his mother, and forward it with some despatches which he knew were to be sent to Boston on the following day; and after having arranged matters for secret visits to his sister, he left her, fervently thanking God for the kind care that watched over her flickering lamp of life.

Shall we follow Eliot Lee to his hiding-place? shall we betray his secret meditations? shall we show the golden thread that ran through their dark web? shall we confess, that amid the anxieties (some understood by our readers, and some yet unexplained) that lowered over him, a star seemed to have risen above his horizon? Yes—we dare confess it; for a little reflection rebuked his presumption, and he exclaimed, "What is it to me if she be free?"

Isabella passed the night in watching with Mrs. Archer over her unconscious little friend; and as she gazed on her meek brow, on the beautiful features that were stamped with truth and tenderness, her indignation rose against him who, for the poor gratification of his miserable vanity, could meanly steal away the treasure of her affections—that most precious boon, given to feed the lamp of life, and light the way to heaven.

Mrs. Archer, at this crisis, felt much like one who, having seen a rich domain relieved, by the sudden interposition of Providence, from a pernicious intruder, is impatient to see it in possession of a lawful proprietor. It was womanly and natural, that when she and Isabella were watching at Bessie's bedside, she should descant on Eliot—should recall his tenderness and gentleness to Bessie, and the true heroism with which, for her sake, he repressed the indignation that was ready to burst on Meredith. Mrs. Archer thought Isabella listened languidly, and assented coldly. She told her so. "Dear aunt Mary," she replied, "my mind is absorbed in a delicious, devout sense of escape. From my childhood I have been in thraldom—groping in mist. Now I stand in a clear light—I see objects in their true colours—I am mistress of myself, and am, as far as relates to myself, perfectly happy. Some other time we will talk over what your friend said, and did, and did not do, and admire it to your heart's content. Now I am entirely selfish; I have but one idea—but one sensation!" Mrs. Archer was satisfied.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Chi puo dir com' egli arde é in picciol fuoco."

Meredith left Mrs. Archer's in a state of feverish excitement. He paced up and down the street, trying by projects for the future to drive away the memory of the past. The thought of his degradation before Isabella Linwood was insupportable; and the recollection that Eliot Lee had bestowed the stinging epithet of villain on him in her presence, roused his strongest passions and stimulated him to revenge. He turned his steps towards Sir Henry Clinton's. "I shall but do a common duty," he said, "in giving information that a rebel officer, high in Washington's favour, is in disguise in the city—I shall, indeed, be summarily avenged, if Tryon should requite on Lee's head the death of Palmer." The man to whom his thoughts adverted was he in relation to whom Putnam had addressed to Tryon the famous laconic note.

"Sir,—Nathan Palmer, a lieutenant in the service of your king, has been taken in my camp as a spy, condemned as a spy, and will be hung as a spy.

"P. S.—He has been hanged."

The thought of such a catastrophe changed Meredith's purpose. He had no taste for tragedy. He believed that Eliot's visit to the city had relation only to Bessie, and shrinking from adding such an item to his account with her as the betrayal of her natural protector, he turned back and retraced his way homeward, meditating a retaliation better suited than revenge to his shallow character. Passions flow from deep sources. Meredith's relations with Isabella were far more interesting to him than the life or death of Eliot Lee, or his poor sister; and in trying to devise some balm for his wounded vanity, he hit upon an expedient on which he immediately resolved. This alluring expedient was none else than an immediate engagement with Lady Anne Seton; which, being antedated but by a few hours, would demonstrate to Isabella Linwood that he, and not she, had first thrown off the shackles; and would leave for ever rankling in her proud bosom the tormenting recollection that she had involuntarily confessed she loved him, as he had tauntingly said, "a thought too late."

His decision made, he hastened home, dwelling with the most soothing complacency on his recent meeting with his cousin on the banks of the Hudson, and smiling as he thought how delighted she would be at his profiting by her hint, in thus soon offering to be joint tenant of her love-built American cottage.

"Where is my cousin?" he asked, as he entered the drawing-room, and found his mother sitting alone.

"Where she eternally is," replied his mother, throwing down her book and eyeglass, and rising with the air of one who has borne a vexation till it is no longer supportable; "it is the most inexplicable infatuation; the girl seems absolutely bewitched by Isabella Linwood."

"But Miss Linwood is not at home this evening. I left her at her aunt Archer's."

"At Mrs. Archer's?—you were with her there, Jasper?"

Meredith replied smiling, and without attempting to evade his mother's probing eye, "Yes, I was there, but much against my will, for I had hoped to pass this evening with you and my cousin."

"Thank you, my son, thank you. I flattered myself that all was settled in your mind—definitively settled—when you so gallantly assured Anne that you soon should be 'irretrievably in love,' leaving her to supply the little hiatus which no girl, in like case, would fail to fill with her own name. And now I will be perfectly frank with you, Jasper—indeed, if there is *any* thing on which I pride myself, it is frankness. You understood the intimation in the Italian stanza I gave you from the carriage this afternoon?" Meredith bowed. "It conveyed a little history in a few words, my son; I have simply aimed to be '*la stella*,' by

which you, a wise and skilful '*nocchiero*,' should, taking advantage of fair winds and favourable tides, guide your vessel into port. But why speak in figures when we perfectly understand one another? Our dear little Anne—a sweet attractive creature is she not?—was left to my guardianship, or rather matronship, for your poor uncle was so very thoughtless as to vest me with no authority to control her fortune, or her choice of a husband."

"Bless my soul! is it possible?"

"Too true, indeed. You now perceive in what embarrassing circumstances I was placed. This pretty girl on my hands, with her immense and unencumbered property; nothing short of the utmost prudence and energy on my part could save her from being the prey of fortune-hunters (alas! for poor human nature!—the lady uttered this without a blush)—rest assured, Jasper, that nothing would have induced me in these perilous times to cross the Atlantic, but my duty to my orphan niece."

"And the remote prospect of benefiting me, my dear mother."

Mrs. Meredith was too intent on the interesting subject upon which she was entering, to notice the sarcasm her son had not the grace to suppress. "I had my anxieties," she continued, "I frankly confess to you, I had my anxieties before I arrived about Miss Linwood, and—some few I have had since—"

Mrs. Meredith paused and fixed her eyes on

Jasper. "On my honour you have not the slightest ground for them," he said.

She proceeded. "Miss Linwood is in some respects a superior young person—she has not the—the—the talent of Helen Ruthven—nor the—the—the grace of Lady Anne (no wonder the perplexed diplomatist hesitated for a comparative that should place Isabella Linwood below these young ladies); but, as I said, she is a superior young person—a remarkable looking person, certainly; at least, she is generally thought so. I do not particularly like her style—tenderness and manageableness, like our dear Anne's, are particularly becoming in a female. Miss Linwood is too lofty—one does not feel quite comfortable with her. On the whole, I consider it quite fortunate you did not form an attachment in that quarter—prudence must be consulted—not that I would be swayed by prudential considerations—certainly not—no one thinks more than I do of the heart; but when, as in your case, Jasper, the taste and affections accord with a wise consideration of—of—"

"*Fortune*, my dear mother?"

"Yes, Jasper, frankly, fortune—I esteem it a remarkably happy circumstance. Your own fortune may or may not be large. The American portion of it depends upon contingencies, and therefore it would have been rash for you to have encumbered yourself with a ruined family; for, as I am informed, the Linwoods have but just enough to subsist de-

cently upon from day to day. It is true, they keep up a respectable appearance. Anne, by-the-way, tells me they get up the most delicious *petits soupers* there. It is amazing what pride will do! —what sacrifices some people make to appearances!"

"There must be something else than mere table luxuries to make these suppers so attractive to my cousin."

"Undoubtedly; for as to that, you know, we have every thing that money can purchase in this demi-savage country; to be sure, Anne might have a foolish, girlish liking for Miss Linwood, but then I am quite confident—I hesitate, for if there is *any* thing on which I pride myself, it is being scrupulous towards my own sex in affairs of the heart; but I betray nothing, for though you are perfectly free from coxcombry, you are not blind, and you must have seen—"

"Not seen, but *hoped*, my dear mother," replied Meredith, with a smile that indicated assurance doubly sure.

"Hope is the fitting word for *you*—but your hope may be *my* certainty. I betray no secrets. Anne has not been confidential, but the dear child is so transparent—"

"She seems, however, to have been rather opaque in this Linwood attachment."

"Yes, I confess myself baffled there—you may have opened a vein of coquetry, Jasper. I know

not what it means, but it can mean nothing to alarm us. It is very odd, though—there is nothing there to gratify her, and every thing here. This very evening Governor Tryon called with the young prince, to propose to get up a concert for her. By-the-way, a pretty youth is Prince William!—he left this bouquet for Lady Anne. The honourable Mr. Barton and Sir Reginald were here too, and the Higbys—and there she is, mewed up with that old fretful Mr. Linwood. She must think, Jasper, you are not sufficiently devoted to her."

"She shall not think so in future."

"Hark, there is the carriage!—I sent her word that I was not well. In truth, her absence has teased me into a headache, and my own room will be the best place for me." Thus concluding her tedious harangue, the lady made a hasty retreat; and before Lady Anne had exchanged a salutation with Meredith, and thrown aside her hat and cloak, her aunt's maid appeared with a message from this "frank" lady, importing her sense of Lady Anne's kindness in coming home, and informing her that prudence obliged her to abstain from seeing her niece till morning.

"I am very sorry!" said Lady Anne, heaving a deep sigh, sinking down in the arm-chair her aunt had just left, resting her elbow on it, and looking pensively in the fire.

"You need not be so deeply concerned, my kind cousin; my mother is not *very* ill," said Meredith,

with difficulty forbearing a laugh at the disparity between the cause and the effect on his apparently sympathizing cousin.

"Ill!" exclaimed Lady Anne, starting, "I did not suppose that she was ill."

"Then why, in the name of Heaven, that deep sigh?"

"There are many causes of sighs, cousin Jasper."

"To you, Lady Anne, so young, so gifted, so lovely, so *beloved*."

"That should be happiness!" she replied, covering her face with her hands to hide the tears that, in spite of all the anti-crying tendencies of her nature, gushed from her eyes.

"Those dimpled hands," thought Meredith, "hiding so childishly her melting face, might move an anchoret; but they move not me. I am too pampered—to know that I have been loved by Isabella Linwood, with all the bitter, cursed mortification that attends it, is worth a world of such triumphs as this. Poor Bessie—I remember too! but, *allons*, I will take the good 'the gods provide,' since I cannot have that which they deny. Cousin—"

"Did you speak to me, Jasper?"

"Now, by my life," thought Meredith, "my words are congealed—they will not flow to such willing ears."

"I am playing the fool," exclaimed Lady Anne,

suddenly rising and dashing off her tears. "Good night, Jasper—I have betrayed myself—no, no, I did not mean that—pray forget my weakness—I am nervous this evening for the first time in my life, and I know nothing of managing nerves—good night, Jasper!"

Meredith seized her hand and held her back. "Indeed, my sweet coz, you must not go now."

"Must not go! Why not?" she replied, excessively puzzled by the expressive smile that hovered on his lips.

"Why not! Because you are too much of an angel to shut your heart so suddenly against me after allowing me a glimpse at the paradise within."

"What do you mean?" she asked, now beginning, from Meredith's manner, and from the well-tutored expression of his most sentimental eyes, to have some dim perception of his meaning, and to be disconcerted by it.

"Dear Anne, did you not, with your own peculiar, enchanting ingenuousness, say you had betrayed yourself? Never was there a sweeter—a more welcome treachery." He fell on his knee, and pressed her hand to his lips.

"For the love of Heaven, Jasper," she cried, snatching her hand away, "tell me what I have said or done."

"Nothing that you should not, dearest cousin; your betrayal, as you called it, was, I know, involuntary, and for that the dearer."

"Are you in earnest, Jasper?"

"In earnest! most assuredly; and do you, Lady Anne, like all your sex, delight in torturing your captives?—your captive I certainly am, for life."

The truth was now but too evident to Lady Anne; but she was so unprepared for it, her mind had been so wholly preoccupied, that it seemed to her the marvellous result of some absurd misunderstanding. At first she blushed, and stammered, and then, following her natural bent, laughed merrily.

To Meredith, this appeared a childish artifice to shelter her mortification at having made, in military phrase, a first demonstration. His interest was stimulated by this slight obstacle; and rallying all his powers, he began a passionate declaration in the good set terms "in such cases made and provided;" but Lady Anne cut him off before he had finished his peroration. "This is a most absurd business, Jasper; I entreat you never to speak of it again. Aunt, or somebody, or something, has misled you—misled you certainly are. I never in my life thought of you in any other light, than as a very agreeable cousin, nor ever shall. I am very sorry for you, Jasper; but really, I am not in fault, for I never, by word or look, could have expressed what I never felt. Good night, Jasper." She was running away, when she turned back to add, "Pray, say nothing of this to my aunt, and let us meet to-morrow as we have

always met before." She then disappeared, and left Meredith baffled, mortified, irritated, and most thoroughly awakened from his dreams. Her face, voice, and manner, were truth itself; and rapidly reviewing their past intercourse, and carefully weighing the words that had misled him, he came to the conclusion that he had been partly misguided by his mother, and partly the dupe of his previous impressions. The measure of his humiliations was filled up.

But his vanity survived the severe and repeated blows of that evening. Vanity has a wonderful tenacity of life: it resembles those reptiles that feed greedily on every species of food, the most delicate and the grossest, and that can subsist on their own independent vitality.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Heart! what's that?

"Oh, a thing servant-maids have, and break for John the footman."

If Meredith could have borne off his charming heiress-cousin, his love for Isabella might have gone to the moon, or to any other repository of lost and forgotten things. But, balked in that pursuit, it resumed its empire over him. He passed a feverish, sleepless night, revolving the past, and reconsidering Isabella's every word and look during their interview of the preceding evening; and finally, he came to a conclusion not unnatural (for few persons give others credit for less of a given infirmity than they themselves possess), that Isabella's vanity had been wounded by the conviction that she had been, for a time, superseded by Bes ie Lee; and that the ground he had thus lost might, by a dexterous manœuvre, be regained. Engrossed with his next move, he appeared at breakfast-table as usual, attentive to his mother, and polite to Lady Anne, who, anxious to express her good-will, was more than ordinarily kind; and Mrs. Meredith concluded that if matters had not gone as far as she had hoped, they were going on swimmingly. The breakfast finished, Lady Anne

ran away from her aunt's annoying devotions to the Linwoods, and Meredith retired to his own room to write, after weighing and sifting each word, the following note to Isabella. He did not send it, however, till he had taken the precaution to precede it by a written request to Lady Anne (with whom he had found out too late that honest dealing was far the safest) that she would, on no account—he asked it for *her own sake*—communicate to *any one* their parting scene of the preceding evening. His evil star ruled the ascendant, and Lady Anne received the note too late.

To Miss Linwood.

"Montaigne says, and says truly, that '*toutes passions que se laissent, gouster et digerer ne sont que mediocres;*' but how would he—how shall I characterize a passion which has swallowed up every other passion, desire, and affection of my nature—has grown and thriven upon that which would have seemed fatal to its existence!

"Isabella, these are not hollow phrases; you know they are not; and be not angry at my boldness; I know your heart responds to them, and, though I was stretched on the rack to obtain this knowledge, I thank my tormentors. Yes, by Heaven! I would not exchange that one instant of intoxicating, bewildering joy, when, even in the presence of witnesses, and such witnesses! you confessed you *had* loved me, for ages of a common

existence. Thank Heaven, too, the precious confession was not through the hackneyed medium of words. Such a sentiment is not born in your bosom to die. I judge from my own inferior nature. I have loved on steadily, through absence, coldness, disdain, caprice (pardon me, my proud, my adored Isabella), in spite of the canker and rust of delay after delay; in spite of all the assaults of those temptations to which the young and fortunate are exposed. Can I estimate your heart at a lower rate than my own?

"As to that silly scene last evening, though it stung me at the moment, and goaded me to an unmeaning impertinence, yet, on a review of it, do you not perceive that we were both the dupes of a little dramatic effect? and that there is no reality in the matter, except so far as concerns the lost wits of the crazed girl, and the very natural affliction of her well-meaning brother, whose unjust and hasty indignation towards me, being the result of false impressions, I most heartily forgive.

"As to poor Bessie Lee, I can only say, God help her! I am most sincerely sorry for her; but neither you nor I can be surprised that she should be the dupe of her lively imagination, and the victim of her nervous temperament. I ask but one word in reply. Say you will see me at any hour you choose; and, for God's sake, Isabella, secure our interview from interruption."

In half an hour, and just as Meredith was sallying

forth to allay his restlessness by a walk in the open air, he met his messenger with a note from Miss Linwood. He turned back, entered the unoccupied drawing-room, and read the following :—

"I have received your note, Jasper ; I do not reply to it hastily ; hours of watchfulness and reflection at the bedside of my friend have given the maturity of years to my present feeling. *I have loved you*, I confess it now ; not by a treacherous blush, but calmly, deliberately, in my own handwriting, without faltering or emotion of any sort. Yes, I have loved you, if a sentiment springing from a most attachable nature, originating in the accidental intercourse of childhood, fostered by pride, nurtured by flattery, and exaggerated by an excited imagination, can be called love.

"I have loved you, if a sentiment struggling with doubt and distrust, seeking for rest and finding none, becoming fainter and fainter in the dawning light of truth, and vanishing, like an exhalation in the full day, can be called love.

"You say truly. Bessie Lee *is* the dupe of a too lively imagination, and the victim of a nervous temperament. To these you might have added, an exquisitely organized frame, and a conscience too susceptible for a creature liable to the mistakes of humanity. Oh, how despicable, how cruel, was the vanity that could risk the happiness of such a creature for its own gratification! I have wept

bitterly over her; I should scarcely have pitied her, had she been the unresisting slave and victim of a misplaced and unrequited passion.

"After what I have written, you will perceive that you need neither seek nor avoid an interview with me; that the only emotion you can now excite, is a devout gratitude that our former interviews *were interrupted*, and circumstances were made strong enough to prevail over my weakness.

"ISABELLA LINWOOD.

"P. S.—I have detained my messenger, and opened my note to add, that your cousin has just come in, and with a confidence befitting her frank nature, has communicated to me the farce with which you followed up the tragedy of last evening."

Meredith felt, what was in truth quite evident, that Isabella Linwood was herself again. He threw the note from him in a paroxysm of vexation, disappointment, and utter and hopeless mortification; and covering his face with his hands, he endured one of those moments that occur even in this life, when the sins, follies, and failures of by-gone years are felt with the vividness and acuteness of the actual and present, and memory and conscience are endued with supernatural energy and retributive power.

What a capacity of penal suffering has the All-wise infused into the moral nature of man, even the weakest!

"The mind is its own place, and in itself,
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

Meredith was roused by the soft fall of a foot-step. He started, and saw Helen Ruthven, who had just entered, and was in the act of picking up the note he had thrown down. She looked at the superscription, then at Meredith. Her lustrous eyes suffused with tears, and the tears formed into actual drops, and rolled down her cheeks. "Oh, happy, most happy Isabella Linwood!" she exclaimed. Meredith took the note from her and threw it into the fire. Miss Ruthven stared at him, and lifted up her hands with an unfeigned emotion of astonishment. After a moment's pause, she added, "I still say, *most* happy Isabella Linwood. And yet, if she cannot estimate the worth of the priceless kingdom she sways, is she most happy? You do not answer me; and you, of all the world, cannot." Meredith did not reply by word; but Miss Ruthven's quick eye perceived the cloud clearing from his brow; and she ventured to try the effect of a stronger light. "I cannot comprehend this girl," she continued; "she is a riddle—an insolvable riddle to me. A passionless mortal seems to me to approach nearer to a monster than to a divinity deserving your idolatry, Meredith. She cannot be the cold, apathetic, statue-like person she appears—"

"And why not, Miss Ruthven?"

"Simply because a passionless being cannot in-

spire passion—and yet—and yet, if she were a marble statue, your love should have been the Promethean touch to infuse a soul. Pardon me—*pity* me, if I speak too plainly; there are moments when the heart will burst the barriers of prudence—there are moments of desperation, of self-abandonment. I cannot be bound by those petty axioms and frigid rules that shackle my sex—I cannot weigh my words—I must pour out my heart, even though this prodigality of its treasures 'naught enriches you, and makes me poor indeed!'"

Helen Ruthven's broken sentences were linked together by expressive glances and effective pauses. She gave to her words all the force of intonation and emphasis, which produce the effect of polish on metal, making it dazzling, without adding an iota to its intrinsic value. Meredith lent a most attentive ear, mentally comparing the while Miss Ruthven's lavished sensibilities to Isabella's jealous reserve. He should have discriminated between the generosity that gives what is nothing worth, and the fidelity that watches over an immortal treasure; but vanity wraps itself in impenetrable darkness. He only felt that he was in a labyrinth of which Helen Ruthven held the clew; and that he was in the process of preparation to follow whithersoever she willed to lead him.

We let the curtain fall here; we have no taste for showing off the infirm of our own sex. We were willing to supply some intimations that might

be available to our ingenuous and all-believing young male friends; but we would not reveal to our fair and true-hearted readers the flatteries, pretences, false assumptions, and elaborate blandishments, by which a hackneyed woman of the world dupes and beguiles; and at last (obeying the inflexible law of reaping as she sows) pays the penalty of her folly in a life of matrimonial union without affection—a wretched destiny, well fitting those who profane the sanctuary of the affections with hypocritical worship.

While the web is spinning around Meredith, we leave him with the wish that all the Helen Ruthvens in the world may have as fair game as Jasper Meredith.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Adventurous I have been, it is true,
And this fool-hardy heart would brave—nay, court,
In other days, an enterprise of passion;
Yea, like a witch, would whistle for a whirlwind.
But I have been admonished."

Our humble story treats of the concerns of individuals, and not of historical events. We shall not, therefore, embarrass our readers with the particulars of the secret mission on which Eliot Lee had been sent to the city by the commander-in-chief. He needed an agent, who might, as the exigency should demand, be prudent or bold, wary or decided, cautious or gallant, and self-sacrificing. He had tested Eliot Lee, and knew him to be capable of all these rarely-united virtues. Eliot had confided to Washington his anxieties respecting his unfortunate sister, and his burning desire to go to the city, where he might possibly ascertain her fate. Washington gave him permission to avail himself of every facility for the performance of his fraternal duty, consistent with the public service on which he sent him. His sympathies were alive to the charities of domestic life. While the military chieftain planted and guarded the tree that was

to overshadow his country, he cherished the birds that made their nests in its branches.

Eliot was instructed to seek a hiding-place in the city at a certain Elizabeth Bengin's, a woman of strong head and strong heart, whose name is preserved in history as one who, often at great personal risk, rendered substantial service in the country's cause. Dame Bengin and her parrot Sylvy, who seemed to preside over the destinies of the shop, and did in fact lure many a young urchin into it, were known to all the city. The dame herself was a thick-set, rosy little body, fair, fat, and forty; her shop was a sort of thread and needle store: but as the principle of division of labour had yet made small progress in our young country, Mistress Bengin's wares were as multifarious as the wants of the citizens. Mrs. Bengin's first principle was to keep a civil tongue in her own and in Sylvy's head, she "holding civility (as she often said and repeated) to be the most disposable and most profitable article in her shop." It was indeed seriously profitable to her, for it surrounded her with an atmosphere of kindness, and enabled her, though watched and suspected by the English, to follow her calling for a long while unmolested.

She gave Eliot an apartment in a loft over her shop, to which, there being no apparent access, Eliot obtained egress and ingress by removing a loose board that, to the uninstructed eye, formed a part of the ceiling of the shop.

From this hiding-place Eliot sallied forth to execute his secret purposes, varying his disguises, which were supplied by Mrs. Bengin, as caution dictated. As all sorts of persons frequented the shop, no attention was excited by all sorts of persons coming out of it. Eliot's forced masquerading often compelled him to personate various characters during the day, and at evening, with simply a cloak over his own uniform, and a wallet over his arm, like those still used by country doctors, and precisely, as Dame Bengin assured him, like that carried by the "doctor that attended the quality," he made his way, sheltered by the obscurity of the night, to Mrs. Archer's, where he was admitted by one of the children, whose acute senses caught the first sound of his approaching footsteps. Eliot, in spite of remonstrances from his prime minister, Mrs. Bengin, had persisted in appearing in his own dress at Mrs. Archer's. In vain the good dame speculated and soliloquized; she could not solve the mystery of this only disobedience to her counsel. "To be sure," she said, "it makes a sight of difference in his looks, whether he wears my tatterdemalion disguises, wigs, scratches, and what not, or his own nice uniform, with his own rich brown hair, waving off his sunshiny forehead—a bright, pleasant, tight-built looking youth he is, as ever I put my two eyes upon; and if he were going to see young ladies, I should not wonder that he did not want to put his light under a bushel;

but, my conscience ! to keep up such a brushing and scrubbing—my loft is not so *very* linty either —just to go before the widow Archer—to be sure, she is a widow ; but then, there never was a man yet that dared to have any courting thoughts of her, any more than if she were buried in her husband's grave ; and this is not the youth to be presuming."

Dame Bengin knew enough of human nature to have solved the mystery of Eliot's toilet, if she had been apprized of one material fact in the case. At Mrs. Archer's, watching at Bessie's bedside, Eliot always found Miss Linwood ; and though the truest, the most anxious, and tender of brothers, he was not unconscious of her presence, nor unconscious that her presence mingled with his sufferings for his sister a most dangerous felicity. His fate was inevitable ; he at least thought it so ; and that fate was an intense and unrequited devotion to one as unattainable to him as if she were the inhabitant of another planet. He did not resist his destiny by abating one minute of those hours that were worth years of a drawing-room intercourse. In ordinary circumstances, Isabella's soul would have been veiled from so new an acquaintance ; but now, constantly under the influence of strong feeling and fresh impulses, and a most joyous sense of freedom, her lofty, generous, and tender spirit glowed in her beautiful face, and inspired and graced every word and movement.

Her devotion to Bessie was intense; not simply from compassion nor affection, but remembering, that in her self-will she had insisted, in spite of her father's disinclination, and her aunt's most reasonable remonstrances, on Bessie's visit to the city, she looked upon herself as the primary cause of her friend's misfortunes, and felt her own peace of mind to be staked on Bessie's recovery. What a change had the discipline of life wrought in Isabella's character! the qualities were still the same; the same energy of purpose, the same earnestness in action, the same strength of feeling, but now all flowing in the right channel, all having a moral aim, and all governed by that religious sense of *duty*, which is to the spirit in this perilous voyage of life what the compass is to the mariner.

Of Bessie's recovery there seemed, from day to day, little prospect. One hopeful circumstance there was. The intelligent physician consulted by Mrs. Archer had frankly confessed that his art could do nothing for her, and had advised leaving her entirely to the energies of nature. Would that this virtue of *letting alone* were oftener imitated by the faculty! that nature were oftener permitted to manifest her power unclogged, and unembarrassed by the poisons of the drug-shop!

Bessie was as weak and helpless as a new-born infant, and apparently as unknowing of the world about her. With few and brief exceptions, she slept day and night. Her face was calm, peaceful,

and not inexpressive, but it was as unvarying as a picture. Her senses appeared no longer to be the ministers of the mind; she heard without hearing, and saw without seeing, and never attempted to speak. At times, her friends despaired utterly, believing that her mind was extinct; and then again they hoped it was a mere suspension of her faculties, a rest preluding restoration.

While fear and hope were thus alternating, a week passed away. Eliot's mission was near being accomplished. The evening of the following day was appointed for the consummation of his plans. The boats, with muffled oars and trusty oarsmen, were in readiness, and the plan for the secret seizure of a most important personage so well matured, that it was all but impossible it should be baffled. The most brilliant result seemed certain: and well-balanced as Eliot's mind was, it was excited to the highest pitch when a communication reached him from headquarters, informing him that Washington deemed it expedient to abandon the enterprise of which he was the agent; and he was directed, if possible, to cross the Hudson during the night, and repair to the camp near Morristown. And thus ended the hope of brilliant achievement and sudden advancement; and he went to pay his last visit to his sister—for the last time to see Isabella Linwood!

She met him with good news lighting her eyes,

"Bessie is reviving!" she said; "she has pressed my hand, and spoken my name!"

"Thank God!" replied Eliot, approaching the bedside. For the first time Bessie fixed her eye on him as if conscious at whom she was looking; then, as he bent over her, she stretched out her arms, drew his face to hers, and kissed him, feebly murmuring, "dear Eliot!"

The effort exhausted her, and she reverted to her usual condition. "This must be expected," said Miss Linwood, replying to the shade of disappointment that passed over Eliot's brow; "but having seen such a sign of recovery, you will leave her with a light heart?"

Eliot smiled assentingly; a melancholy smile enough. "You still," she continued, "expect to get off to-morrow evening?"

"No, my business in the city is finished, and I go this very night."

"To-night! would to Heaven that Herbert were going with you!"

"Not one regret for my going!" thought Eliot, and he sighed involuntarily. "You seem," resumed Isabella, "very suddenly indifferent to Herbert's fate—you do not care to know, before you go, how our plans are ripening?"

"Indifferent to Herbert's fate!—to aught that concerns you, Miss Linwood!"

"A commonplace compliment from you, Captain Lee—well, as it is the first, I'll forgive you—

not so would Herbert, for making him secondary in a matter where he is entitled to the honour, as he has the misery of being principal. Poor fellow! his adversities have not taught him patience, and Rose tells me he is very near the illness he has feigned, and that if he does not get off by to-morrow night, he will fret himself into a fever."

"Have you made Lady Anne acquainted with your project?"

"Yes, indeed! and her quick wit, loving heart, and most ingenious fingers, have been busy in contriving and executing our preparations. She is wild enough to wish to be the companion of Herbert's flight—this is not to be thought of—but I have promised her that she shall see him once more. Lizzy Bengin will go with us to the boat, where, if Heaven prosper us, he will be by eight to-morrow evening. And then, Captain Lee, should you persuade General Washington to receive and forgive him, we shall be perfectly happy again."

"Perfectly happy!" echoed Eliot, in a voice most discordant with the words he uttered.

"Oh, pardon me! I did not mean that. It is cruel to talk to you of happiness while Bessie is in this uncertain condition—and most unjust it is to myself, for I never shall be happy unless she is restored, and mistress of herself again."

"Ah, Miss Linwood, that cannot be. In her best days she had not the physical and mental power required to make her 'mistress of herself;'

no, it can never be. If it were not for my mother, who I know would wish Bessie restored to her, even though she continue the vacant casket she now is, I should, with most intense desire, pray God to take her to himself—there alone can a creature so sensitive and fragile be safe and at peace!"

"You are wrong—I am certain you are wrong. There is a flexibility in our womanly nature that is strength in our weakness. Bessie will perceive the delusion under which she has acted and suffered, and which had dominion over her, because, like any other dream, it seemed a reality while it lasted. Yes, her affections will return to their natural channels to bless us all." Eliot shook his head despondingly. "You are faithless and unbelieving," continued Isabella; and then added, smiling and blushing, "but I reason from experience, and therefore you should believe me."

This was the first time that Meredith had been alluded to. The allusion was intrepid and generous; and if a confession of past weakness, it was an assurance of present, conscious, and all-sufficient strength. That Eliot at least thought so, was evident from the sudden irradiation of his countenance; a brightness misinterpreted by Isabella, who immediately added, "I have convinced you, and you will admit I was not so very rash in saying that we should all again be perfectly happy."

Eliot made no reply; he walked to the extremity of the room, paused, returned, gazed intently yet abstractedly at his sister, then at Isabella, and then mechanically took up his hat, laid it down, and again resumed it.

Isabella was perplexed by his contradictory movements. "You are not going so soon?" she said. He did not reply. "Shall I call my aunt?" she added, rising.

Eliot seized her hand, and withheld her. "No, no, not yet—Miss Linwood, I am playing the hypocrite—it is not alone my anxiety for my sister that torments me—that made your prediction of happiness sound to me like a knell." He paused, and then yielding to an irresistible impulse, he impetuously threw himself at Isabella's feet. "Isabella Linwood, I love you—love you without the presumption of the faintest, slightest hope—before we part for ever, suffer me to tell you so."

"Captain Lee, you astonish me!—you do not mean—"

"I know I astonish you, but I will not offend you. Is it folly—rashness—obtrusiveness, to pour out an affection before you, that expects nothing in return, asks nothing but the satisfaction of being known, and not offensive to you?"

"Oh, no, no; but you may regret—"

"Never, never. From this moment I devote my heart—I dedicate my existence to you: inasmuch as God permits me to love aught beneath

himself, I will love you. I must now part from you for ever; but wherever I go your image will attend me—that cannot be denied me—it shall defend me from temptation, incite me to high resolves, pure thoughts, and good deeds."

"Such homage might well make me proud," replied Isabella, "and I am most grateful for it; but your imagination is overwrought; this is a transient excitement—it will pass away."

"Never!" replied Eliot, rising, and recovering in some degree the steadiness of his voice; "hear me patiently; it is the only time I shall ever ask your indulgence. I am not now, nor was I ever, under the dominion of my imagination or my passions. I have been trained in the school of exertion, of self-denial, and self-subjection; and I would not, I could not love one who did not sway my reason, who was not entitled to the homage of my best faculties. I have been moved by beauty, I have been attracted by the lovely—I have had my fancies and my likings—what man of two-and-twenty has not?—I never *loved* before; never before felt a sentiment that, if it were requited, would have made earth a paradise to me; but that unrequited, unsustained but by its own independent vitality, I would not part with for any paradise on this earth."

The flush of surprise that first overspread Isabella's face had deepened to a crimson glow. If a woman is not offended by such language as Eliot's,

she cannot be unmoved. Isabella's was a listening eye. It seemed to Eliot, at this moment, that its rays touched his heart and burned there. She passed her hand over her brow, as one naturally does when the brain is becoming a little blurred in its perceptions. "This is so very strange, so unexpected," she said, in the softest tone of that voice, whose every tone was music to her lover's ear—"in one short week—it cannot be!"

Isabella but half uttered her thoughts: she had been misled, as most inexperienced observers are in similar cases, by the tranquillity of Eliot's manner; she respected and liked him exceedingly; but she thought him unexcitable, and incapable of passion. She had yet to learn that the strongest passions are reducible to the gentlest obedience, and may be so subjected as to manifest their power, not in irregular and rebellious movements, but only in the tasks they achieve. She did not now reflect or analyze, but she felt, for the first time, there was that in Eliot Lee that could answer to the capacities of her own soul.

"This is, undoubtedly, unexpected to you," resumed Eliot, "but should not be strange. When I first saw you I was struck with your beauty; and I thought, if I were a pagan, I should imbody my divinity in just such a form, and fall down and worship it—that might have been what the world calls *falling in love*, but it was far enough from the all-controlling sentiment I now profess to you.

Our acquaintance has been short (*I* date farther back than a *week*) ; but in this short period I have seen your mind casting off the shackles of early prejudices, resisting the authority of opinion, self-rectified, and forming its independent judgments on those great interests in which the honour and prosperity of your country are involved. I have gloried in seeing you willing to sacrifice the pride, the exclusiveness, and all the little idol vanities of accidental distinctions, to the popular and generous side.

"Nay, hear me out, Isabella; I will not leave you till you have the reasons of my love; till you admit that I have deliberately elected the sovereign of my affections; till you feel, yes, *feel*, that my devotion to you can never abate." He hesitated, and his voice faltered; but he resolutely proceeded: "Other shackles has your power over woman's weakness enabled you to cast off."

"Oh, no—no; do not commend me for that—they fell off."

"Be it so: they could not fetter you, that is enough."

"Then," said Isabella, somewhat mischievously, "I think you like me for, what most men like not at all—my love of freedom and independence of control."

"Yes, I do; for I think they are essential to the highest and most progressive nature; but I should

not love it if it were not blended with all the tenderness and softness of your sex. The fire that mounts to Heaven from the altar, diffuses its gentle warmth at the fireside. Think you, that while you have been tending my sister, I have been unmindful of your kindly domestic qualities, or blind to the thousand womanly inventions by which I see you ministering to the happiness of these unfortunate children? Have you thought me insensible to your intervention for my poor boy, Kisel, though God, in much mercy to him, willed it should be bootless? I do homage to your genius, talent, and accomplishment, but I love your gracious, domestic, home-felt virtues. I am exhausting your patience." Isabella had covered her face; overpowered with the accumulated proof that Eliot had watched her with a fond lover's eye. After a slight hesitation, he proceeded to obey a most natural, if it be a weak longing. "Allow me, if you can, one solace, one blessed thought to cheer a long life of loneliness and devotion. I am bold in asking it; but, tell me, had I known you earlier, had no predilection forestalled me, had no rival intervened, do you think it possible that you should have returned my love?"

Some one says that all women are reared hypocrites—trained to veil their natures; Isabella Linwood, at least, was not. She replied, impulsively and frankly, "Most certainly I should."

Eliot again fell at her feet. He ventured to take her hand, to press it to his lips, to wet it with his tears. "I am satisfied," he said; "now I can go; and the thought that I might, under a happier star, have been loved by Isabella Linwood, shall elevate, guide, and sooth me, in all the chances and changes of life."

While Eliot was uttering these last words, and while Isabella was absorbed in the emotions they excited, the door was softly opened, and Lizzy Archer, flitting across the room, said in a low voice, "Oh, Captain Lee! what shall we do?—there are horrid soldiers watching at both our doors for you—mamma is out, and I could not sleep—I never sleep when you are here, for fear something will happen—I heard their voices at the side door; and when I came through the hall, I heard others through the street door—what shall we do?—Cousin Belle, pray think—you can always think in a minute."

But "Cousin Belle's" presence of mind had suddenly forsaken her; and as Eliot's eye glanced towards her, he saw she was pale and trembling. A hope shot into his mind, a thought of the possibility that if he were not now severed from her, that which she had generously admitted might have been, might still be. To exclude this newborn hope seemed to him like the extinction of life. He rapidly revolved the circumstances in which he was placed. He had done, in the affair

intrusted to him, all, and even more than his commander expected; it had failed of consummation through no fault of his; he was in the American uniform, and thus captured, he might claim the rights of a prisoner of war; the temporary loss of his presence in camp would be unimportant to the cause; and remaining for a time within reach of Isabella Linwood might result in good, infinite good, and happiness to himself. He wavered; but the fixed habit of rectitude prevailed, the duty of the soldier over the almost irresistible inclinations of the man: he shut out the temptation, and only considered the means of escape. "Dear Lizzy," he said, "if I could find my way to your skylight—I have observed the descent would not be dangerous from there to the back building, and so down on the roofs of the other offices."

"But," said Lizzy, for the little creature seemed to have considered the whole ground, "if there should be soldiers too at the back gate?"

"I will avoid them, Lizzy, by going into the next yard to yours, then over two or three walls, till I find it safe to emerge into the street."

"I can lead you to the skylight. I am very glad I am blind, so I shall not need any light; for that would show you to the soldiers, who are standing by the side windows of the hall-door. Oh, dear, I hope they won't hear my heart beat; but it does beat so!"

There were other hearts there that beat almost

audibly besides poor Lizzy's; but there was no time to indulge emotions. Eliot kissed his unconscious sister; and then grasping the hand Isabella extended to him, he would have said, "Farewell for ever!" but his voice was choked, and the last ominous word was unpronounced. His little guide led him noiselessly up the stairs, through the entries, and to the skylight; and then fondly embracing him and promising to give his farewells to "mother and Ned," she parted from him, and stood fixed and breathless, listening till she believed he had eluded those who were lying in wait for him, when she returned to give full vent to her feelings on Isabella's bosom, and to find more sympathy there than she wotted of.

We shall not follow our hero through his "imminent dangers and hair-breadth 'scapes." Suffice it to say, he did escape; and having passed the Hudson in the same little boat that brought "Harmann Van Zandt" to the city, he eluded the British station at Powles Hook, passed their redoubts, and at dawn of day received at the camp at Morristown the warm thanks of Washington, who estimated conduct by its intrinsic merit, and not, according to the common and false standard, by its results.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"Good sir, good sir, you are deceived; it is no man at all!"

At any other juncture, Mr. Linwood would have been restless and unappeasable under the privation of Isabella's society; but now, in his interest and sympathy in Herbert's affairs, and in his fondness for Lady Anne, he found full employment for his thoughts and feelings. Lady Anne persisted in considering herself Herbert's betrothed; and in spite of her aunt, who, as her niece affirmed, had become insupportably cross and teasing, she persevered in spending all her evenings with the Linwoods. The charm that love imparts to those who are connected with the object of a concentrated affection, was attached to Herbert's father and mother. Lady Anne felt the most tender anxieties for her lover; but, sustained by the buoyancy of youth, and a most cheerful and sanguine disposition, she was uniformly bright and animated. Her sparkling eye and dimpled cheek were happiness to Mr. Linwood; the old love cheerfulness as the dim eye delights in brilliant colours.

Mrs. Archer, who was always, in Mr. Linwood's estimation, the *next best* to Isabella, devoted her evenings to him. She saw, or fancied she saw,

that Bessie's countenance expressed a pleased consciousness of Isabella's presence; at any rate, she knew that there was another countenance always lighted up by it. Accordingly, she repaired every evening to Mr. Linwood, and played rubber after rubber, performing her tiresome duty with such zest and zeal, that Mr. Linwood pronounced her a comfortable partner and respectable antagonist—"a deal more than he could say for any other woman."

While the surface of this little society remained as usual, there was a strong under-current at work. Herbert, after his explanation with Lady Anne, was resolved to leave no effort unmade to effect his escape from durance, and put himself in the way of those brighter hours that youth and health whispered might come. His first step was taken the morning after his parting with Lady Anne. He enclosed the permit for his visits at home, sent to him by Sir Henry Clinton, to that gentleman, with an acknowledgment of his kindness, but without assigning any reason for declining to avail himself of it farther. He was careful not to involve his honour by any pretences in relation to that obligation; it was off his hands, and he thanked Heaven he was now free to use whatever stratagem would avail him. He feigned illness. He knew Rose would be sent to inquire after him; and he also knew that, when told he was ill, she would, by force or favour, obtain access to him. Fortunately, she was admitted without hesitation;

for Cunningham, conscious of the bad odour he was in on account of his ill-treatment of the American prisoners, deemed it his best policy to inflict no gratuitous hardship on the son of Mr. Linwood. Rose, once admitted, became first counsellor and coadjutor; and with the aid of the young ladies at home, a project was contrived, of which this noble creature was to be the main executer. Herbert's illness, of course, continued unabated; and Rose repeated her visits daily, and made her last, as she hoped, the evening succeeding Eliot's escape. "Lock me in," she said to the turnkey, "and leave me a quarter of an hour or so. I want to coax Mr. Herbert to take a biscuit; he'd die on your dum stuff." Rose had, in fact, brought to Linwood, daily, more substantial rations than biscuit, and thus enabled him to gratify his appetite without endangering his reputation as an invalid. He was in bed when Rose entered, and out of it the moment the turnkey closed the door—"Oh, Rose, God bless you! Is all arranged?" he asked.

"Every thing, Mr. Herbert, snug as a bug in a rug. The young ladies came with me to Mrs. Lizzy's, and she is to be at Smith's house with them precisely at seven. It is now half past six. Mrs. Lizzy's boat, with the muffled oars, that's got off many a prisoner before you, is now waiting for you."

"And are my sister and Lady Anne going to Smith's house without any male attendant?"

"Dear, yes! they are wrapped in cloaks—nobody will know them; and Mrs. Lizzy is as good a guard as horse, foot, and dragoon; there's not a thimbleful of danger, Mr. Herbert, and they fear none, bless their hearts! To be sure, Miss Belle is no great of a soldier in common, and Lady Anne will scream like all natur' at a mouse; but love is a great help to courage in young parsons."

While Rose was making these communications, to which Herbert eagerly listened, she was doffing an extra set of *linsey-woolsey* garments, and transferring them to her young master, who somewhat delayed their adjustment, by putting his feet first into the "cursed petticoat," as he profanely termed it. That most respectable feminine article arranged to Rose's satisfaction, she put over it a shortgown, and a checked handkerchief over all. "Now for the beauties," she said, drawing from her pocket a wig and mask, and holding them up in either hand, "Miss Belle made one, and Lady Anne t'other."

The mask, if it might be so called, was well coloured, and bore a tolerable likeness to Rose. Linwood was enchanted. "Which," he exclaimed, "which did Lady Anne make, Rose?"

"The mask."

Linwood seized it, kissed it, and exclaimed, "Admirably, admirably done!"

"It was not half the trouble the wig was," said Rose.

"Oh, that is capital too, Rose."

"But you don't carry on so about it. Land's sake! However, I suppose you love Miss Belle as well, only it an't a kind of love that breeds antics."

"True, Rose; you may be sure I shall never love anybody better than I do my sister."

Rose was satisfied, and proceeded to tie on the mask, and adjust the fleecy locks. "It's a main pity," she said, "to cover your pretty shining hair with what looks like *nigger's wool*, as they call it."

"Not a bit—not a bit, Rose. I know some *wool* that covers a far better head than mine—more capable, more discerning; and God never created a nobler heart than beats under one black skin."

"Pooh! Mr. Herbert." Rose's pooh was a disclaimer; but as she put it in, she brushed a tear from her eye; then tying a mobcap and black silk bonnet over the wig, and throwing over his shoulders her short blue broadcloth cloak, and hiding his white hands in her mittens, she laughed exultingly, declaring she "should not herself know him from herself." "Now you're *readied*," she said, "settle down as you walk—be prudent, Mr. Herbert—look before you leap. Don't answer them dum fellows, when you go out, a word more than yes or no—I never do. Do your *endeavours*, and the Lord will help you. He helps them as helps themselves—hark! there comes the fellow."

Before the turnkey opened the door she was in bed, her head enveloped in the bedclothes; and Herbert stood, her basket on his arm, apparently

waiting. No suspicion was excited, nor questions asked. They went out, and the door was relocked. Rose raised her head to listen to their receding footsteps. The footsteps ceased, and she heard Cunningham's (the provost-marshal's) voice, "Well, wench," he said, addressing, as she knew, her counterfeit, "how goes it with your young master?"

"Now the Lord o' mercy help him!" she exclaimed; "he used to mimic Jupe—if he only can me."

She did not hear Herbert's reply; but she heard Cunningham say, as if responding to it—"Poorlier, hey? I've got something here that will bring back his stomach—respects to your master—mind, wench." Again she heard Herbert's footsteps recede, and Cunningham enter her cell, and shut and lock the door.

Cunningham's name was a terror to the whigs, and to all that cared for them. The man's excessive cruelty and meanness may be inferred from the extravagant allegations current at the time; that he was in the habit of putting the American prisoners of war to death, in order to sequester the rations allowed them. He had recently reason for apprehensions that an inquiry would be instituted into his conduct by the commander-in-chief, who certainly did not authorize unnecessary cruelties, if he neglected to take cognizance of them.

Rose's head was well muffled in the bedclothes, when Cunningham, coming up to the bed, said, "How goes it, Mr. Linwood; bile uppermost yet? Come,

lift up your head, and speak, man—can't you give an answer to a civil word? Come, come, I'm not Tom nor Sam, to be put off this way—next thing you'll bolt, and I shall have it to answer for; but they sha'n't say I did not do the good Samaritan by you. You won't eat—you won't hear to the doctor—the d—l is in you, man; why don't you rise up? Here's a dose you must take, any how—it's what they give in all cases, calomel and jalap—come, man, if fair means won't do, foul must." The patient continued obstinate, and Cunningham set down the dose, which was mixed in a huge coffee-bowl, beside a basket of vials, containing sundry nauseous medicines, designed for the poor prisoners, as if bad food were not poison and torture enough for them. A contest began, in which Cunningham had reason to be astonished at the strength of the invalid. In the scramble, Rose's head was disengaged from the bedclothes; the truth was revealed, and she sprang on him like a tiger on its prey. The cowardly wretch shrunk back, and drew a knife, crying out, "You d—d nigger!" Rose wrested it from him, and her spirit disdaining the assassin's weapon, she thrust it into the wall, exclaiming—"Now we're even!"

He sprung towards the door—she pulled him back, threw him down, put her knee on his breast, and by the time he had made one ineffectual struggle, and once bellowed for help, she had added laudanum, castor-oil, and ipecacuanha to the calomel

and jalap; and holding his nose between the thumb and finger of one hand, she presented the overflowing bowl to his lips with the other. When she had convinced him of her potentiality, by making him gulp down one swallow, she mercifully withdrew the draught, saying, "If you offer to move one inch, or make a sound, I'll pour it down your throat to the last drop." She then released him from her grasp, and while he was panting and shuddering, she turned her back, muttering something of stringing him up in her *clothes*. The "clothes," which she quickly disengaged from their natural office, proved to be her garters. As she stretched them out, trying their strength, "My own spinning, twisting, and knitting," said she; "they'll bear the weight of twenty such slim pieces as you."

"Are you going to hang me?" gasped out Cunningham.

"Hang you? Yes; but not harm you, if you're quiet, mind. But I'd choke you twice over to give Mr. Herbert time: so mind and keep your breath to cool your porridge." She then turned him over, bound his hands behind him with one garter, and made a slip-noose with the other, while he, like a reptile in the talons of a vulture, crawled and squirmed with a hopeless resistance. "There's no use," said Rose; "you're but a baby in my hands—it's the strong heart makes the strong arm." She then set him upright on Herbert's bed, put

the noose around his neck, and made the other end fast to an iron hook in the wall. This was just achieved, when a hurried footstep was heard, followed by a clattering at the door, and a call for "Master Cunningham!—Master Cunningham!" Rose placed her foot against the foot of the bedstead; Cunningham understood the menace, and suppressed the cry on his lips. The calls were reiterated. Cunningham cast one glance at Rose; her foot was fixed, her lips compressed, and her eyes glaring with a resolution stern as fate. Cunningham felt that the alternative was silence or death, and his face convulsed between the impulse to respond and the effort to keep quiet. The knocking and screaming were repeated; and then finding them ineffectual, the person went off to seek his master elsewhere. Other sounds now roused Rose's generous spirit, and tempted her to inflict the vengeance so well deserved; but hers was not the mind to be swayed by opportunity—"convenience snug."

The apartment adjoining Linwood's was spacious, and crammed with American prisoners. There was a communicating door between them, through which could be distinctly heard any sound or movement louder than usual. Loring, in his customary evening round, had entered this apartment. Loring was Cunningham's coadjutor, and is described by Ethan Allen, who had himself notable experience in that prison, as "the most mean-spirited, cowardly, deceitful, and destructive animal

in God's creation." Rose heard Loring command the prisoners to get to their beds, in his customary phrase (we retrench a portion of its vulgarity and profanity): "Kennel, d—n ye—kennel, ye sons of Belial!"

At this brutal address to persons whom Rose honoured as a Catholic honours the saints, her blood boiled within her. She hastily withdrew her foot from the bedpost, and strided to the extremity of the narrow apartment; then turning and stretching her arm towards Cunningham, she said, with an energy that made his blood curdle, "It is not for me to 'venge them, but God will. Their children shall be lords in the land, and sound out their fathers' names with ringing of bells and firing of cannon, when you, and Loring, and all such car'on, have died and rotted like dogs, as ye are."

The sounds in the adjoining apartment after a while subsided, and with them Rose's ire. She seated herself to await the latest hour when she could retire from the prison, and elude the suspicion of the sentinel, the only person whose vigilance she had to encounter.

The footsteps had ceased from the passages, and sleep seemed, like rain, to have fallen on the just and the unjust—the keepers and their prisoners. Cunningham, seeing Rose preparing to take her departure, begged her, in the most abject manner, before she went, to release him from his frightful position.

"No, no," she obstinately replied to his supplications, "ye shall hang in *iffigy*, to be seen and scorned by your own people; but one marcy I'll do you; if you'll hold your tongue, I'll not let out, while the war lasts—while the war lasts, remember, that you were strung up there by a 'd—n *nigger*'—a nigger *woman!*"

It appeared that Cunningham was glad to accept this very small mercy, by the report that afterward prevailed, that he had only escaped a fitting end through the forbearance of Mr. Herbert Linwood.

Rose passed unmolested through the passage and the outer door, which, being locked on the inside, and the key in the wards, opposed no obstacle to her retreat. The sentinel in the yard saw and recognised her; but not being the same who was on guard when the first Dromeo passed, he merely inferred that Rose had been permitted to remain longer than usual; and kindly opening the gate, he responded civilly to her civil "good-night."

Rose went home, not however to enjoy the quiet sleep which should have followed so good a piece of work as she had achieved, but to suffer, and see others suffer, the most distressful apprehensions.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now."

Isabella and Lady Anne, cloaked and hooded, repaired to Dame Bengin's some half hour, as may be remembered, before the time appointed for their meeting with Linwood. This forerunning of the hour was to allow them to take advantage of Rose's escort. It did not pass without a censure from their wary coadjutor. "You lack discretion, young ladies," she said; "and I lacked it too when I let you in partners in this business. My father used to say, 'if you want to go safe over a tottering plank, always go alone.' However, we must make the best of it now: so just take this box of ribands, and stand at the farther end of the counter, and seem to be finding a match. It is nothing strange for ladies to be tedious at that."

The young ladies obeyed, but Lady Anne fretted in an under voice at the delay; and Isabella ventured a remonstrance, to which Dame Bengin, an autocrat in her own domain, replied, "She must go her own way; that full twenty minutes were left to the time appointed for the meeting at Smith's house, and time was money to her."

"I wish to Heaven I could wring that parrot's neck," whispered Lady Anne; "I do believe the people answer to its call." The parrot kept up a continuous scream of "Come in!—come in!" that might have tormented nerves less excitable than our friend's were at this moment.

"I surmise we are going to have a storm," said an old woman, who had stepped in for a penny-worth of *cochinia* for her grandchildren; "its always a sign of a storm when Sylvy keeps up such a chattering at night-fall." Lizzy Bengin went to the door, and looked anxiously at the gathering clouds.

"Come in!—come in!" cried Sylvy; and, as if obedient to her summons, trotted in, one after another, half a dozen urchins. One wanted "a skein of sky-blue silk for aunt Polly: not too light, nor too dark; considerable fine, and very strong; not too slack nor too hard twisted." Lizzy Bengin looked over half a dozen papers before she could meet the order of her customer.

"Pray send the whole to aunt Polly," cried Lady Anne; "I will pay you, Bengin." The boy stared, the dame seemed not to hear her, and bade the boy run home and tell aunt Polly she hoped the skein would suit.

"Twopence worth of button-moulds—just this size, ma'am." The indefatigable Mrs. Bengin explored the button-mould box.

"Mammy wants a nail of silk, a shade lighter

than the sample." Mrs. Bengin looked over her pile of silks.

"Come in!—come in!" still cried Sylvy, certainly not the silent partner of the house.

"Aunty wants a dust of snuff, and she'll pay you to-morrow."

"How much is a drawing of your best bohea, Mrs. Bengin?"

"Mrs. Lizzy, uncle John wants to know if you've got any shoes about little Johnny's size?"

While Mrs. Bengin, who was quite in the habit of securing the mint, anise, and cummin of her little trade, was with the utmost composure satisfying these multifarious demands, the minutes seemed ages to our impatient friends; Isabella took out her watch. The dame perceived the movement, and seemed to receive an impulse from it, for she was dismissing the shoe inquirer with a simple negative, when in came a black girl, with a demand for "spirits of *camphire*."

"What's the matter, Phillis?"

"Madam Meredith has got the *hystrikes*."

"Then she has my note," whispered Lady Anne.

While the camphire was pouring out, a sturdy sailor-boy entered. "Ah, is that you, Tom Smith? A hand of tobacco you're wanting? Well, first come first served—just be taking in Sylvy, while I'm getting a cork to suit the vial." Mrs. Bengin seemed suddenly fluttered by a look from Tom

and she bade the servant run home *sans* cork. The moment Phillis had passed the threshold, Lizzy said, "Speak out, Tom, there are none but friends here!"

"It's too late, Lizzy Bengin, you're lost!"

The inquiries and replies that followed were rapid. The amount of Tom's intelligence was, that some combustibles had been discovered near the magazine, and that as strange persons had recently been observed going to and coming from Lizzy's shop, it was believed that a plot had been there contrived; the commandant had issued an order for her apprehension, and men were by this time on their way to seize her.

Lizzy Bengin had so often been suspected, and threatened, and eluded detection, that she did not now believe her good fortune had deserted her. She heard Tom through, and then said, "My boat is ready and I'll dodge them yet."

Isabella ventured to ask, with scarcely a ray of hope, "if they might still go with her?"

"Yes, if you're not afeared, and will be prudent. Shut the shutters, Tom—lock the door after us, and keep them out as long as possible, that we may gain time. Throw my books into the loft—don't let 'em rummage and muss my things, and look to Sylvy." Her voice was slightly tremulous as she added, "If any thing happens to me, Tom, be kind to Sylvy!"

By this time her cloak and hood were on, and

they sallied forth. Dame Lizzy's valour was too well tempered by discretion to have permitted her to consent to the attendance of the young ladies, if she had not, after calculating the chances, been quite sure that no danger would be thereby incurred. She believed that her pursuers, after being kept at bay by her faithful ally Tom, would be at a loss where next to seek her. The place appointed for meeting Linwood was a little untenanted dwelling, near the water's edge, called "Smith's house." There he was to doff his disguise, and there, should there be any uproar in the streets, the young ladies could remain till all was quiet. Isabella and Lady Anne were in no temper to consider risks and chances. Life, to the latter, seemed to be set on the die of seeing Herbert once more. Isabella felt a full sympathy with this most natural desire, and an intense eagerness to be immediately assured of her brother's escape; so, clinging close to their sturdy friend, they hastened forward.

The old woman's interpretation of Sylvy's cries proved a true one. A storm was gathering rapidly. Large drops of rain pattered on the pavement, and the lightning flashed at intervals. But the distance to the boat, lying in a nook just above Whitehall, was short, and the moon, some seven nights old, was still unclouded. They soon reached "Smith's house," and heard the joyful signal-whistle previously agreed on.

"He is here!" exclaimed Isabella.

Lady Anne's fluttering heart was on her lips, but she did not speak. Herbert joined them.

"Now kiss and part," cried Lizzy Bengin. The first command was superfluous; the second it seemed impossible to obey. It was no time for words, and few did they mingle with the choking sighs of parting, but these few were of the marvellous coinage of the heart, and the heart was stamped upon them. The storm increased, and the darkness thickened. "Come, come; this won't do, young folks," cried their impatient leader; "we must be off—we've foul weather to cross the river, and then to pass the enemy's stations before daylight—the hounds may be on our heels too—we must go."

All felt the propriety, the necessity of this movement. Lady Anne only begged that they might go to the water's edge, and see the boat off. Dame Bengin interposed no objection; that would only have caused fresh entreaties and longer delay, and they set forward. The distance to the boat was not above a hundred yards; they had reached the shore, Mrs. Bengin was already in the boat, and Herbert speaking his last word, when they heard the voices of pursuers, and the next flash of lightning revealed a file of soldiers rushing towards them. Lady Anne shrieked; Lizzy Bengin screamed, "Jump in, sir, or I'll push off without you."

"Go," cried Isabella, "dear Herbert, go."

"I will not—I cannot, and leave you in the hands of these wretches."

"Oh, no! do not—do not, Herbert," entreated Lady Anne, "take me with you." This was enough and irresistible. Herbert clasped his arm around her, and leaped into the boat.

"Come with us, Isabella," screamed Ladv Anne.

"For God's sake, come, Belle," shouted Herbert. Isabella wavered for an instant. Another glare of lightning showed the soldiers within a few feet of her, looking, in that lurid light, fierce and terrible beyond expression; Isabella obeyed the impulse of her worst fears and leaped into the boat; and Lizzy, who stood with her oar fixed, instantly pushed from the shore. Curses burst from the lips of their balked pursuers.

"We'll have them yet," exclaimed their leader. "To the Whitehall dock, boys, and get out a boat!"

Our boat's company was silent. Herbert, amid a host of other anxieties, was, as he felt Lady Anne's tremulous grasp, bitterly repenting this last act of a rashness which he flattered himself experience had cured, and Isabella was thinking of the beating hearts at home.

Dame Bengin, composed, and alone wholly intent on the present necessity, was the first to speak. "Don't be scared, little lady," she said; "sit down quiet—don't touch his arm—he'll need all its strength. Do you take the tiller, Miss Linwood—mind exactly what I tell you—I know every turn

in the current—don't lay out so much strength on your oars, Captain Linwood—keep time to the dip of mine—that will do!"

Dame Bengin, with good reason, plumed herself on her nautical skill. Her father had been a pilot, and Lizzy being his only child, he had repaired, as far as possible, what he considered the calamity of her sex, by giving her the habits of a boy. Her childhood was spent on the water, and nature and early training had endowed her with the masculine spirit and skill that now did her such good service. The courage and cowardice of impulse are too much the result of physical condition to be the occasion of either pride or shame.

The wind was rising, the lightning becoming more vivid and continuous, and the pelting cold rain driving in the faces of our poor fugitives. The lightning gloriously lit up a wild scene; the bay, a "phosphoric sea;" the little islands, that seemed in the hurly-burly to be dancing on the crested waves; and the shores, that looked like the pale regions of some ghostly land. Still the little boat leaped the waves cheeringly, and still no sound of fear was heard within it. There is something in the sublime manifestations of power in the battling elements, that either stimulates the mind of man, "stirs the feeling infinite," and exalts it above a consciousness of the mortality that invests it, or crushes it under a sense of its own impotence. Our little boat's company were a group

for a painter, if a painter could kindle his picture with electric light. Lizzy Bengin, her short muscular arms bared, and every nerve of body and mind strained, plied her oars, at each stroke giving a new order to her unskilled but most obedient coadjutors. Isabella's head was bare, her dark hair hanging in masses on each side her face, her poetic eye turning from "heaven to earth and earth to heaven," her face in the lurid light as pale as marble, and like that marble on which the sculptor has expressed his own divine imaginings in the soft forms of feminine beauty. Lady Anne sat at Herbert's feet, her eye fixed on his face, passively and quietly awaiting her fate, not doubting that fate would be to go to the bottom, but feeling that such a destiny would be far more tolerable with her lover, than any other without him. This dependance, "love overcoming the fear of death," inspired Herbert with preternatural strength. His fine frank face beamed with hope and resolution, and his eye, as ever and anon it fell on the loving creature at his feet, was suffused with a mother's tenderness.

In the intervals of darkness they guided the boat by the lights on the shores, and towards a light that, kindled by a confederate of Lizzy Bengin's for Herbert's benefit, blazed steadily, in spite of the rain, a mile below Powles Hook.

They were making fair headway, when they perceived a sail-boat put off from Whitehall

They were pursued, and their hearts sunk within them; but Lizzy Bengin soon rallied, and her inspiring voice was heard, calculating the chances of escape. "The storm," she said, "is in our favour —no prudent sailor would spread a sail in such a gusty night. The wind is flawy too, and we can manage our boat, running first for one point and then for another, so as to puzzle them, and in some of their turns, if they have not more skill than any man has shown since my father's day, they'll capsize their boat."

We dare not attempt to describe the chase that followed; the dexterous manœuvring of the little boat, now setting towards Long Island, now back to the city, now for Governor's Island, now up, and then down the river. We dare not attempt it. Heaven seems to have endowed a single genius of our land with a chartered right to all the *water privileges* for the species of manufacture in which we are engaged, and his power but serves to set in desperate relief the weakness of his inferiors. The water is not our element, and we should be sure to show an "alacrity in sinking."

Suffice it to say, it seemed that the efforts of our little boat's crew must prove unavailing; that after Dame Bengin's sturdy spirit had yielded to her woman's nature, and she had dropped her oars, and given the common signals of her sex's weakness in streaming tears and wringing hands,

Herbert continued laboriously to row, till Lady Anne, fainting, dropped her head on his knee, and Isabella entreated him to submit at once to their inevitable fate. Nothing indeed now remained but to run the boat ashore, to surrender themselves to their pursuers, to obtain aid for Lady Anne, and secure protection to her and Isabella. The resolution taken, the boat was suddenly turned; the sail-boat turned also, but too suddenly; the wind struck and capsized it. The bay was in a blaze of light when the sail dipped to the water—intense darkness followed—no shriek was heard.

After the first exclamations burst from the lips of our friends, not a sound proceeded from them, not a breath of exultation at a deliverance that involved their fellow-beings in destruction. The stroke of Herbert's oars ceased, and the fugitives awaited breathlessly the next flash of lightning, to enable them to extend their aid, if aid could be given. The lightning came and was repeated, but nothing was to be seen but the boat drifting away at the mercy of the waves.

A few moments more brought them to land, where, beside their beacon-light, stood an untenanted fisherman's hut, in which they found awaiting them a comfortable fire and substantial food. These "creature comforts," with rest and rekindled hope, soon did their work of restoration. And the clouds clearing away, and the stars shining out

cheerily, Lizzy Bengin, aware that her presence rather encumbered and endangered the companions of her flight than benefited them, bade them a kind good-night, and sought refuge among some of her Jersey acquaintance, true-hearted to her, and to all their country's friends.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Good to begin well, better to end well."

What was next to be done was as puzzling to our friends as the passage of that classic trio, the fox, the goose, and the corn, was to our childish ingenuity. Duty and safety were involved in Linwood's return to the American camp with all possible expedition. General Washington was at Morristown, and the American army was going into winter quarters in its immediate vicinity. Thither Linwood must go, and so thought Lady Anne must she. "Fate," she said, "had seconded her inclinations, and to contend against their united force was impossible; why should she not give her hand to Herbert at once and be happy, instead of returning to vex and be vexed by her disappointed aunt? After they had made sure of happiness and Heaven's favour, for Heaven would smile on the union of true and loving hearts, let the world gossip to its heart's content about Linwood running off with an heiress; he who was so far above a motive so degrading and soul-sacrificing, could afford the imputation of it, and would soon outlive it." There was both nature and truth in her reasoning, and it met with her lover's full and irrepressible sympathy; with Isabella's too, but not with her acquiescence.

Poor Isabella! it was hard for one who had her keen participation in the happiness of others to oppose it, and to hazard by delay the loss of its richest materials. There was an earnest seconding of their entreaties, too, from a voice in the secret depths of her heart, which whispered that Eliot Lee was at Morristown; but what of that? ay, Isabella, *what of that?* Once at Morristown, her return to the city might be indefinitely delayed; innumerable obstacles might interpose, and to return to her father was an imperative and undeferable duty. To permit Lady Anne to proceed without her would be to expose her to gossip and calumny. Isabella's was the ruling spirit; and after arguments, entreaties, and many tears on the lady's part, the lovers deferred to the laws of propriety as expounded by her; and it was agreed that Linwood should escort the ladies to the outskirts of the Dutch village of Bergen, which could not be more than two or three miles distant; that there they should part, and thence the means of returning to the city without an hour's delay might easily be compassed.

Accordingly, two hours before daylight, they set forth, following, through obscure and devious footpaths, the general direction of Bergen. Miranda truly says, "it is the good-will to the labour that makes the task easy." Lady Anne had no goodwill to hers, and her footsteps were feeble and faltering. The day dawned, the sun rose, and as yet they saw no landmarks to indicate the vicinity

of Bergen. Herbert feared they had missed their way; but without communicating his apprehensions, he proposed the ladies should take shelter in a log-hut they had reached, and which he thought indicated the proximity of a road, while he went to reconnoitre.

He had been gone half an hour, when Isabella and Lady Anne were startled by the firing of guns. They listened breathlessly. The firing was repeated, but unaccompanied by the sound of voices, footsteps, or the trampling of horses.

"It is not near," said Isabella to her little friend, who had clasped her hands in terror; "Herbert will hear it and return to us, and we are quite safe here."

"Yes; but if he is taken—murdered, Isabella? Oh, let us go and know the worst."

"It would be folly," replied Isabella, "to expose ourselves, and risk the possibility of missing Herbert; but if you will be quiet, we will creep up to that eminence," pointing to a hill before them; "if it is cleared on the other side, we may see without being seen."

They forthwith mounted the hill, which presented a view of an open country, traversed by several cross-roads. The point where they intersected, a quarter of a mile distant, at once fixed their gaze. A party of some thirty Americans, part mounted and part on foot, were engaged in a hot contest with more than an equal number of the enemy.

Lady Anne grasped Isabella's arm, both were silent for a moment, when a cry burst from Lady Anne's lips, "It is—it is he!"

"Who? where—what mean you?"

"Your brother, Isabella!—there, the foremost! on the black horse!"

"It is he! God have mercy on us!—and there is Eliot Lee!"

Lady Anne's eye was riveted to Linwood. "There are three upon him," she screamed; "fly, fly!—Oh, why does he not fly?"

"He fights bravely," cried Isabella, covering her eyes. "Heaven aid you, my brother!"

"It's all over," shrieked Lady Anne.

Isabella looked again. Herbert's horse had fallen under him. "No, no," she cried; "he lives! he is rising!"

"But they are rushing on him—they will cut him to pieces!"

Isabella sprang forward, as if she would herself have gone to his rescue, exclaiming—"My brother, Herbert—Oh, Eliot has come to his aid! God be praised!—See, Anne!—look up. Now they fight side by side!—Courage, courage, Anne! Mercy upon us, why does Eliot Lee turn back?"

"Oh, why does not Herbert turn too? if he would but fly while he can!"

"Ah, there he comes!" exclaimed Isabella, without heeding her companion's womanly wish, "urging forward those men from behind the wagons—

On, on, good fellows! Ah, that movement is working well—see, see; the enemy is disconcerted! they are falling back! thank God, thank God! See what confusion they are in; they are running, poor wretches; they are falling under that back fire!"

The flying party had taken a road which led to an enclosed meadow, and they were soon stopped by a fence. This opposed a slight obstacle, but it occasioned delay. The Americans were close upon them; they turned, threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners.

Shortly after, Eliot Lee, his face radiant with a joy that fifty victories could not have inspired, stood at the entrance of the log-hut, informing the ladies that Linwood had confided them to his care; Linwood himself having received a wound, which, though slight, unfitted him for that office, and rendered immediate surgical aid desirable to him. His friend had bidden him say to Miss Linwood that they had wandered far from Bergen; and that as they could not now get there without the danger of encountering parties of the enemy, nothing remained but to accept Captain Lee's protection to Morristown.

"Do you hesitate now, Isabella?" asked Lady Anne, impatiently.

"No, my dear girl, there is now no choice for us."

"Thank Heaven for that. Nothing but necessity would conquer you, Isabella." The necessity met a very willing submission from Isabella; and

she was half inclined to acquiesce in a whispered intimation from Lady Anne, "that it was undoubtedly the will of Heaven they should go to Morristown." They were soon seated in a wagon, and proceeding forward, escorted by Eliot and a guard, and hearing from him the following explanation of his most fortunate meeting with Linwood.

Eliot Lee had been sent by Washington, with wagons, and a detachment of chosen men, to afford a safe convoy for some important winter-stores that had been run across from New-York to the Jersey shore for the use of the officers' families at Morristown. In the meantime, a vigilant enemy had sent an intimation of the landing of these stores, and of their destination, to the British station at Powles Hook, and a detachment of men had been thence despatched with the purpose of anticipating the rightful proprietors.

Eliot, on his route, encountered one of the enemy's videttes, whom he took prisoner, and who, to baffle him, told him the stores were already at Powles Hook. Eliot, warily distrusting the information, proceeded, and directly after, and just as he came in view of the enemy's party, he met Herbert issuing from the wood. A half moment's explanation was enough. The vidette was dismounted, Herbert put in his place, armed with his arms, and a golden opportunity afforded (to which the brave fellow did full justice), to win fresh laurels wherewith to grace his return to the dreaded, and yet most desired, presence of his commander.

CHAPTER XL.

"Our profession is the chastest of all. The shadow of a fault tarnishes our most brilliant actions. The least inadvertence may cause us to lose that public favour which is so hard to gain."

THE quotation from a public reprimand of Washington to a general officer, which forms the motto to this chapter, contains the amount of his reproof to Linwood in their first and private interview. Even this reproof was softened by the generous approbation his general expressed of the manliness and respectful submission with which he had endured the penalty of his rashness. Linwood's heart was touched ; and, obeying the impulse of his frank nature, he communicated the circumstances that had mitigated his captivity, and gave a sort of dot and line sketch of his love-tale to the awe-inspiring Washington. Oh the miracles of love ! But let not too much power be ascribed to the blind god. Linwood's false impressions of Washington's impenetrable sternness were effaced by his own experience, the most satisfactory of all evidence. He found that this great man, like Him whom he imitated, was not strict to mark iniquity, and was, whenever he could be so without the sacrifice of higher duties, alive to social virtues and affections.

"Well, my young friend," he said, as Linwood concluded, "you certainly have made the most of your season of affliction, and now we must take care of these generous companions of your flight. Our quarters are stinted; but Mrs. Washington has yet a spare room, which they must occupy till they can return with safety to the city, and choose to do so."

Linwood thought himself, and with good reason, requited a thousand fold for all his trials. His only embarrassment was relieved, and he had soon after the happiness of presenting his sister and Lady Anne Seton to Mrs. Washington, a most benign and excellent woman, and of confiding them to the hospitalities of her household. Eliot and Linwood's gallantry, in their rencounter with the enemy, was marked, and advanced them in the opinion of their fellow-officers; but the signal favour it obtained from the ladies of Morristown, must have been in part a collateral consequence of the immense importance, to their domestic comfort, of those precious stores which our friends had secured for them.

Their sympathy in the romantic adventures of the young ladies was manifested in the usual feminine mode, by a round of little parties: from stern necessity, frugal entertainments, but abounding in one luxury, so rare where all others now abound, that it might be thought unattainable; the highest luxury of social life—what is it?

With the luggage of our heroines came encouraging accounts from Mrs. Archer of Bessie Lee's progress, assurances of Mr. Linwood's unwonted patience, and hints that it would be most prudent for her young friends to remain where they were till the excitement, occasioned by their departure, had subsided. Still Isabella was so thoroughly impressed with the filial duty of returning without any voluntary delay, that at her urgent request, measures were immediately taken to effect it; but obstacle after obstacle intervened. Sir Henry Clinton was about taking his departure for the south, and he put off from time to time giving an official assurance of an act of oblivion in favour of our romantic offenders. The rigours of that horrible winter of 1780, still unparalleled in the annals of our *hard seasons*, set in, and embarrassed all intercommunication.

It must be confessed, that Isabella bore these trials with such gracious patience, that it hardly seemed to be the result of difficult effort. It was quite natural that she should participate in the overflowing happiness of her brother and friend. And it was natural that, being now an eyewitness of the struggles, efforts, endurance, and entire self-sacrifice of the great men that surrounded her, her mind, acute in perception, and vigorous in reflection, should be excited and gratified. There are those who deem political subjects beyond the sphere of a woman's, certainly of a young woman's mind. But if our young ladies were to give a portion of

the time and interest they expend on dress, gossip, and light reading, to the comprehension of the constitution of their country, and its political institutions, would they be less interesting companions, less qualified mothers, or less amiable women? "But there are dangers in a woman's adventuring beyond her customary path." There are; and better the chance of shipwreck on a voyage of high purpose, than expend life in paddling hither and thither on a shallow stream, to no purpose at all.

Isabella's mind was not regularly trained; and, like that of most of her sex, the access to it was through the medium of her feelings. Her sympathies were not limited to the few, the "bright, the immortal names" that are now familiar as household words to us all. She saw the same virtues that illustrated them conspicuous in the poor soldiers; in that class of men that have been left out in the world's estimate, and whose existence is scarcely recognised in its past history. The winter of 1780 was characterized by Washington as "the decisive moment, the most important America had seen!" The financial affairs of the country were in the utmost disorder. The currency had so depreciated, that a captain's pay would scarcely furnish the shoes in which he marched to battle. The soldiers were without clothes or blankets, and this in our coldest winter. They had been but a few days in their winter quarters before the flour and

meat were exhausted ; and yet, as Washington said in a letter to Congress, after speaking of the patient and uncomplaining fortitude with which the army bore their sufferings, "though there had been frequent desertions—not one mutiny." Happy was it for America that, in the beginning of her national existence, she thus tested the virtue of the *people*, and, profiting by her experience, was confirmed in her resolution to confide her destinies to *them!*

Something above the ordinary standard has been claimed for our heroine ; but it must be confessed, after all, that she was a mere woman, and that the mainspring of her mind's movements was in her heart. How much of Isabella's enthusiasm in the American cause was to be attributed to her intercourse with Eliot Lee, we leave to be determined by her peers. That intercourse had never been disturbed by the cross-purposes, jarring sentiments, clashing opinions, and ever-annoying disparities, that had so long made her life resemble a troubled dream. Eliot's world was her world; his spirit answered to hers. During that swift month that had flown away at Morristown, how often had she secretly rejoiced in the complete severance of the chain that had so long bound her to an "alternate slave of vanity and love!"—how she exulted in her freedom—*freedom!* the voluntary service of the heart is better than freedom.

There were no longer any barriers to Isabella and Lady Anne's return to the city. The day was

fixed; it came; and while they were packing their trunks, and thinking of the partings that awaited them, Lady Anne's eyes streaming, and Isabella's changing cheek betraying a troubled heart, a letter was handed to Lady Anne. She looked at the superscription, threw it down, then resumed it, broke the seal, and read it. Without speaking, she mused over it for a moment, then suddenly disappeared, leaving her affairs unarranged, and did not return till Isabella's trunk was locked, and she was about wrapping herself in her travelling furs. She reproved her little friend's delay, urged haste, suggested consolation, and offered assistance. Lady Anne made no reply, but bent over her trunk, where, instead of arrangement, she seemed to produce hopeless confusion. "How strange," she exclaimed, "that Thérése should have sent me this fresh white silk dress!"

"Very strange; but pray do not stay to examine it now."

"Bless Thérése! Here is my Brussels veil, too!"

"My dear child, are you out of your senses? Our escort will be waiting—pray, pray make haste."

"And pray, dear Belle, don't stand looking at me—you fidget me so. Oh, I forgot to tell you Captain Lee asked for you—he is in the drawing-room—go down to him—please, dear Belle." As Lady Anne looked up, Isabella was struck with the changed expression of her countenance; it was

bright and smiling, the sadness completely gone. But she did not stay to speculate on the change, nor did she, it must be confessed, advert to Lady Anne for the next fifteen minutes. Many thoughts rushed through her mind as she descended the stairs. She wondered, painfully wondered, if Eliot would allude to their memorable parting at Mrs. Archer's; "if he should repeat what he then said, what could she say in reply?" When she reached the drawing-room door, she was obliged to pause to gain self-command; and when she opened it she was as pale as marble, and her features had a stern composure that would have betrayed her effort to any eye but Eliot's; to his they did not.

Eliot attempted to speak the commonplaces of such occasions, and she to answer them; but his sentences were lame, and her replies monosyllables; and they both soon sunk into a silence more expressive of their mutual feelings.

"Lady Anne said he asked for me—well, it was but to tell me the cold has abated!—and the sleighing is fine! and he trusts I shall reach the city without inconvenience! What a poor simpleton I was to fancy that such sudden and romantic devotion could be lasting. A very little reality—a little everyday intercourse, has put the actual in the place of the ideal!"

If Isabella had ventured to lift her eye to Eliot's face at this moment, she would have read in the conflict it expressed the contradiction of her false

surmises; and if her eye had met his, the conflict might have ceased, for it takes but a spark to explode a magazine. But Eliot had come into her presence resolved to resist the impulses of his heart, however strong they might be. He thought he should but afflict her generous nature by a second expression of his love, and his grief at parting. There had been moments when a glance of Isabella's eye, a tone of her voice—a certain indescribable something, which those alone who have heard and seen such can conceive, had flashed athwart his mind like a sunbeam, and visions of bliss in years to come had passed before him; but clouds and darkness followed, and he remembered that Miss Linwood was unattainable to him—that if it were possible by the devotion of years to win her, how should he render that devotion, pledged as he was to his country for a service of uncertain length, and severed as he must be from her by an impassable barrier of circumstances? As he had said to Isabella, he had been trained in the school of self-subjection, and never had he given such a proof of it as in these last few moments; the last he expected ever to enjoy or suffer with her. Both were so absorbed in their own emotions that they did not notice the various entrances and exits of the servants, who were bustling in and out, and arranging cake and wine on a sideboard, with a deal of significance that would have amused unconcerned spectators. A louder, more portentous

bustle followed, the door was thrown wide open, and both Eliot and Isabella were startled from their reveries by the entrance of Mrs. Washington, attended by a gentleman in clerical robes, and followed by Linwood and Lady Anne, in the bridal silk and veil that Thérése, with inspiration worthy a French chambermaid, had forwarded.

"One word with you, Miss Linwood," said Mrs. Washington, taking Isabella apart. "This dear little girl, it seems, was left independent of all control by her fond father. The honourable scruples of your family have alone prevented her surrendering her independence into your brother's hands. She has this morning received a letter from her aunt, written in a transport of rage, at her son's unexpected marriage with a Miss Ruthven. I fancy it is a Miss Ruthven of the Virginia family —Grenville Ruthven's eldest daughter?"

"Yes—yes—it is, madam," replied Isabella, with a faltering voice. The emotion passed with the words.

"Lady Anne's aunt," resumed Mrs. Washington, "declares her intention of immediately returning to England, and renounces her niece for ever. Lady Anne and your brother have referred their case to me; she saying, with her usual playfulness, that she has turned rebel, and put herself under the orders of the commander-in-chief, or rather, he being this morning absent, under mine. I have decided according to my best judgment

There seems to be no sufficient reason why they should defer their nuptials, and endure the torments and perils of a protracted separation. So, my dear Miss Linwood, you have nothing to do but submit to my decision—take your place there as bride's-maid—you see your brother has already stationed his friend, Captain Lee, beside him as groom's-man—Colonel Hamilton is waiting our summons to give away the bride."

At a signal from his mistress, a servant opened the door to the adjoining room, and Hamilton entered, his face glowing with the sympathies and chivalric sentiment always ready to gush from his heart when its social spring was touched. Isabella had but time to whisper to Lady Anne, "Just what I would have prayed for had I dared to hope it," when the clergyman opened his book and performed his office. That over, Mrs. Washington, as the representative of the parents, pronounced a blessing on the bridal pair; and that no due ceremonial should be omitted, the bridal cake was cut and distributed according to established usage; accompanied by a remark from Mrs. Washington, that it must have been compounded by some good hymeneal genius, as it was the only orthodox plum cake that had been or was like to be seen in Morristown, during that hard winter.

Now came partings, and tears, and last kind words, and messages that were sure to find their way to Mr. Linwood's heart, and a bit of wedding-

cake for mamma, who would scarcely have believed her son lawfully married unless she had tasted it; and last of all, an order for a fine new suit for Rose, in compensation for that so unceremoniously dropped at "Smith's house."

At last, Isabella, in a covered sleigh, escorted by a guard, and attended by her brother and Eliot Lee on horseback, set off for the place appointed for her British friends to meet her, and there she was transferred to their protection.

What Eliot endured, as he lingered for a moment at Isabella's side, cannot be expressed. She felt her heart rising to her eyes and cheeks, and by an effort of that fortitude, or pride, or resolution, which is woman's strength, by whatever name it may be called, she firmly said, "Farewell!"

Eliot's voice was choked. He turned away without speaking; he impulsively returned and withdrew the curtain that hung before Isabella. She was in a paroxysm of grief, her head thrown back, her hands clasped, and tears streaming from her eyes. What a spectacle—what a blessed spectacle for a self-distrusting, hopeless lover!

"Isabella!" he exclaimed, "we do not then part for ever?"

"I hope not," she replied.

The driver, unconscious of Eliot's returning movement, cracked his whip, the horses started on their course, and the road making a sudden turn the sleigh instantly disappeared, leaving Eliot feel

ing as if he had been translated to another world—a world of illimitable hope, immeasurable joy.

"'I hope not.'" Could Isabella have uttered a more commonplace reply? and yet these words, with the emotion that preceded them, were a key to volumes—were pondered on and brooded over, through summer and winter—ay, for years.

"*Ah, n'en doutons pas! à travers les temps et les espaces, les âmes ont quelquefois des correspondances mysterieuses. En vain le monde réel èlève ses barrières entre deux êtres qui s'aiment; habitans de la vie idéale, ils s'apparaissent dans l'absence, ils s'unissent dans la mort.*"

CHAPTER XLI.

"Boy, fill me a bumper—now join in the chorus,
There's happiness still in the prospect before us;
In this sparkling glass all hostility ends,
And Britons and we will for ever be friends.
Derry down, derry down."—*Old Song.*

More than three years from the date of our last chapter had passed away. The European statesmen were tired of the silly effort to keep grown-up men in leading-strings, and their soldiers were wearied with combating in fields where no laurels grew for them. The Americans were eager, the old to rest from their labours, and the young to reap the fruit of their toils; and all good and wise men contemplated with joy the reunion of two nations who were of one blood and one faith. King George, firm or obstinate to the last, had yielded his reluctant consent to the independence of his American colonies; and the peace was signed, which was welcomed by all parties, save the few American royalists who were now to suffer the consequences that are well deserved by those who learn unwillingly, and too late, that their own honour and interest are identified with their country's.

The 25th of November, 1783, was, as we are

annually reminded by the ringing of bells and firing of cannon, a momentous day in this city of New-York. It was the time appointed for the evacuation of the city by the British forces, and the entrance of the American commander-in-chief with his army. To the royalists who had remained in the garrisoned city, attached from principle, and fettered by early association, to the original government, this was a day of darkness and mourning. With their foreign friends went, as they fancied, all their distinction, happiness, and glory. We may smile at their weakness, but cannot deny them our sympathy. Such men as Sir Guy Carleton (Sir Henry Clinton's successor), who made even his enemies love him, had a fair claim to the tears of his friends; and others were there whose names grace the history of our parent land, and names not mentioned that were written on living hearts, and which made partings that day

"Such as press the life from out young hearts."

Though on the very verge of winter, the day was bright and soft. The very elements were at peace. At the rising of the sun, the British flag on the Battery was struck. Boats were in readiness at the wharves to convey the troops, and such of the inhabitants as were to accompany them, down to Staten Island, where the British ships were awaiting them. At an early hour, and before the general embarcation, a gentleman, much muffled,

and evidently sedulously avoiding observation, was seen stealing through the by-streets to a boat, to which his luggage had already been conveyed, and which, as soon as he entered it, put off towards the fleet. He looked soured and abstracted, eager to depart, and yet not joyful in going. His attitude was dejected, and his eyes downcast, till some sound that betokened an approach to the ship roused him, when suddenly looking up, he beheld, leaning over the side of the vessel, an apparition that called the blood and the spirit to his face. This apparition was his wife—Mrs. Jasper Meredith. There she stood, bowing to him, and smiling, and replying adroitly to such congratulations from the officers of the ship as, "Upon my word, Mrs. Meredith, you leave the country with spirit—your husband should take a leaf out of your book."

Meredith entered the ship. His wife took him by the arm and led him aside. "One word to you, my dear love," she said, "before that cloud on your brow bursts. I have known from the first your secret intention, and your secret preparations to go off with the fleet, and leave me here to get on as I could. I took my measures to defeat yours. You should know, before this time of day, that I am never foiled in what I undertake—"

"No, by Heaven, never."

"There's no use in swearing about it, my love; nor will there be any use," she added, changing her tone of irony to a cutting energy, "in doing

what, as my husband—my lord and master—you may do, in raising a storm here, refusing to pay my passage, and sending me back to the city. Officers—gentlemen, you know, all take the part of an oppressed wife—you would be put in Coventry, and make your *début* in England at great disadvantage. So, my dear, make the best of it; let our plans appear to be in agreement. It is in bad taste to quarrel before spectators—we will reserve that to enliven domestic scenes in England."

"In England! my mother declares she will never receive you there; and I am now utterly dependant on my mother."

"I know all that; I have seen your mother's letters." Meredith stared. "Yes, all of them; and in them all she reiterates her governing principle, that 'appearances must be managed.' I shall convince her that I am one of the managers, and the *prima donna* in this drama of appearances."

Meredith made no reply. He saw no eligible way of escape, and he was, like a captive insect, paralyzed in the web that enclosed him. "You are convinced, I perceive, my dear;" continued his loving wife, "be kind enough to give me a few guineas; I paid my last to the boatmen, and it is awkward being without money."

Meredith turned from her, and walked hurriedly up and down the deck; then stopped, and took out his pocket-book to satisfy her demand, but his purpose was suspended by his eye falling acci-

dentally on the card, on which, ten years before, he had recorded Effie's prediction. The card was yellow and defaced; but like a talisman, it recalled with the freshness of actual presence the long but not forgotten past—the time when Isabella Linwood's untamed pulses answered to his—when Bessie Lee's soft eye fell tenderly upon him—when he was linked in friendship with Herbert—when the lights of nature still burned in his soul—while as yet his spirit had not passed under the world's yoke, and crouched under its burden of vanity, heartlessness, and sordid ambition. His eye glanced towards his wife, he tore the card in pieces, and honest, bitter tears flowed down his cheeks.

Bessie Lee, thou wert then avenged! Avenged? Sweet spirit of Christian forgiveness and celestial love, we crave thy pardon! Bessie Lee, restored to her excellent mother, and to her peaceful and now most happy home at Westbrook, was enjoying her renovated health and "rectified spirit." The vigorous mind of Mrs. Archer, and Isabella's frank communication of her own malady and its cure, had aided in the entire dissipation of Bessie's illusions, and no shadow of them remained but a sort of nun-like shrinking from the admiration and devotion of the other sex. She lived for others, and chiefly to minister to the sick and sorrowful. She no longer suffered herself; but the chord of suffering had been so strained that it was weak-

ened, and vibrated at the least touch of the miseries of others. The satirist who scoffs at the common fact of devotion succeeding love in a woman's heart, is superficial in the philosophy of our nature. He knows not that woman's love implies a craving for happiness, a dream of bliss that human character and human circumstances rarely realize, and a devotedness and self-negation due only to the Supreme. The idol falls, and the heart passes to the true God.

"All things on earth shall wholly pass away,
Except the love of God, which shall live and last for aye."

That love of God, that sustaining, life-giving principle, waxed stronger and stronger in Bessie Lee as she went on in her pilgrimage. Her pilgrimage was not a long one; and when it ended, the transition was gentle from the heaven she made on earth to that which awaited her in the bosom of the Father.

We return to the shifting scenes in New-York. The morning was allotted to the departure of the British. "Rose," said Mr. Linwood, "give me my cloak and fur shoes, and I will go through the garden to Broadway, and see the last of them—God bless them!"

"And my cloak and calêche, Rose," said Mrs. Linwood; "it is a proper respect to show our friends that our hearts are with them to the last—it should be a family thing. Come, Belle; and you, Lady Anne, come too."

"With all my heart, dear mamma; but pray—pray do not call me *Lady* Anne. I have told you, again and again, that I have renounced my title, and will have no distinction but that which suits the country of my adoption—that which I may derive from being a good wife and mother—the true *American order of merit.*"

"As you please, my dear child; but it is a singular taste."

"Singular to prefer Mrs. Linwood to Lady Anne! Oh, no, mamma."

Mrs. Linwood received the tribute with a grateful smile, and afterward less frequently forgot her daughter-in-law's injunction. Her affections always got the better of her vanity—after a slight contest. "Rose," continued Lady Anne, "please put on little Herbert's fur cap, and take him out to see the show too. Is not that a pretty cap, mamma? I bought it at Lizzy Bengin's."

"Lizzy Bengin's! Has Lizzy returned?"

"Yes, indeed; and re-opened her shop in the same place, and hung up her little household deity Sylvy again, who is screaming out as zealously as ever—'Come in, come in.' Lizzy, they say, is to have a pension from Congress."*

"The d—l she is!" exclaimed Mr. Linwood; "well, every thing is turned topsy-turvy now. Come, are we not all ready? where lags Belle?"

* Lizzy Bengin actually received the pension.

Isabella entered in a very becoming hat and cloak, adjusted with more than her usual care, and her countenance brilliant with animation.

"Upon my word, Miss Belle," said her father, passing his hand over her glowing cheek, "you are hanging out very appropriate colours for this mournful occasion."

"The heart never hangs out false colours, papa."

"Ah, Belle, Belle! that I should live to see you a traitor too; but I do live, and bear it better than I could have expected."

"Because, papa, it no longer seems to you the evil it once did—does it?"

"Yes, I'll be hanged if it don't, just the same; but then, Belle, I'll tell you what it is that's kept the sap running warm and freely in this old, good-for-nothing trunk of mine. My child," the old man's voice faltered, "you have been true and loyal to me through all this dark time of trial and adversity; you have been a perpetual light and blessing to my dwelling, Belle; and Herbert—if a man serves the devil, I'd have him serve him faithfully—Herbert, in temptation and sore trials, has been true to the cause he chose—up to the mark. This it is that's kept me heart-whole. And, Belle, if ever you are a parent, which God grant, for you deserve it, you'll know what it is to have your very life rooted in the virtue of your children, and sustained by that—yes, as mine is, sustained and made pretty comfortable too, even though my king

has to succumb to these rebel upstarts, and I have to look on and see every gentleman driven out of the land to give place to these rag-tag and bob-tails."

"But, papa," said Isabella, anxious to turn her father's attention from the various groups gathering in the street, and who, it was evident, were only waiting, according to the previous compact, for the last British boat to leave the wharf, to give utterance to their joyous "huzzas;" "but, papa, you have overlooked some important items in your consolations."

"I have not mentioned them; but they are main props. Anne, God bless her! and that little dog," he shook his cane lovingly at his grandson, who crowed a response, "though he was born under Washington's flag, and sucks in independence and republicanism with his mother's milk, the little rascal."

In spite of Mr. Linwood's habitual vituperation, it was evident that his cup of happiness was full to overflowing, and that there was in it only a few salutary bitter drops, without which there is no draught commingled for human lips.

Mrs. Archer with her children now joined her friends, and they were all grouped under a fine old locust that stood just without the wall of Mr. Linwood's garden, and was among the few trees that retained any foliage at this advanced season.

The last foreign regiment were passing from

Broadway to the Battery, in the admirable order and condition of British troops: their arms glittering, the uniform of the soldiers fresh and unsullied, and that of the officers, who had seen little service to deface and disarrange it, in a state of preservation rather indicating a drawing-room than a battle-field. Mr. Linwood gazed after them, and said, sorrowfully, "We ne'er shall look upon their like again."

"I hope not," muttered Rose to herself, in the back-ground; "this a'n't to be the land for them that strut in scarlet broadcloth and gold epaulets, and live upon the sweat of working people's brows. No, thank God—and General Washington."

"Ah," said Mrs. Archer, "there is good old General Knyphausen turning the key of his door for the last time. Heaven's blessing will go with him, for he never turned it upon a creature that needed his kindness." The good old German crossed the street, grasped Mr. Linwood's hand, kissed the hands of the ladies, and without speaking, rejoined his suite and passed on.

"Who are those young gallants, Isabella," asked Mr. Linwood, "that seem riveted to the pavement at Mrs. ——'s door?"

Isabella mentioned their names, and added, "Miss —— is there, a magnet to the last moment —a hard parting that must be."

No wonder it was deemed a "hard parting," if half that is told by her contemporaries of Miss

——'s beauty and auxiliary charms be true; a marvellous tale, but not incredible to those who see her as she now is, after the passage of more than fifty years, vivacious, courteous, and bright-eyed.

While Lady Anne was deepening the colour on Isabella's cheek by whispering, "Better a coming than a parting lover!" our old friend Jupiter, arm in arm with his boon companion "the gen'ral," was passing.

"Where are you going in such haste, Jupe?" asked his ex-master, in reply to Jupiter's respectful salutation.

"I am 'gaged to 'black Sam' to dine with General Washington, sir."

Mr. Linwood had been told that a *fête* was in preparation at "black Sam's," the great restaurateur of his day, for General Washington and his friends. He was ready to believe almost any extravagance of the levelling Americans; but the agrarianism that made Jupiter a party at the festive board with the commander-in-chief rather astounded him. "By the Lord!" he whispered to Isabella, "Herbert shall come home and eat his dinner."

"You mean, Jupe," said Miss Linwood, without directly replying to her father, "that you are engaged to wait on General Washington, at black Sam's?"

"Sartin, Miss Isabella; did not I 'spress myself so?"

"Not precisely, Jupe; but I understood you so."

Jupiter drew near to Miss Linwood, whom he, in common with others, looked upon as the presiding genius of the family, to unfold a wish that lay very near his heart. But Jupe was a diplomatist, and was careful not to commit himself in the terms of a treaty. "Miss Belle," he said, "I hear Mrs. Herbert Linwood has got a nice char'ot sent over from England, and if she wants a coachman, I don't know but I might like to come back to the old place."

"Very well, Jupe, I will speak to my sister, and we will consider of it."

"Do, Miss Belle, and I'll '*sider* of it too. I have not '*finitly* made up my mind to stay in New-York. They say there's to be such bustle and racket here, building ships and stores, and all this space," pointing to the still vacant space between Broadway and the river, "all this space to be covered with housen bigger than them burnt down. I'm afraid there'll be too much work and 'fusion for me; 'tant genteel, you know, Miss Belle, and I think of 'tiring to the manor."

"That will be wisest, Jupe; New-York will no longer be a place for idlers of any degree."

Jupiter, all complacency in a classification which sorted him with those whom he styled the genteel, bowed and passed on.

Music was now heard from the extremity of the Battery. All had embarked save the *band*. The

band, that had been the pride and delight of the inhabitants, through winter and summer, now struck up, for the last time, "God save the king!" Every sound was hushed, and white handkerchiefs were waved from balconies, windows, and doors. Mr. Linwood uncovered his head, and the tears trickled down his cheeks. As the music ceased, Edward Archer, who stood with his arm over his sister's shoulder, said, "Oh, Lizzy, how we shall miss the band!"

"Miss them! No, Ned; not when we get back to dear breezy Beech Hill, and hear the birds, and smell the flowers, and have none to hurt us nor make us afraid."

The last boat put off from the wharf, and at the next instant the "star-spangled banner" was unfurled from the flagstaff, and every bell in the city poured forth its peal of welcome to the deliverer of his country, who was seen, at the head of a detachment of his army, approaching the city through *the Fields*, then the general designation of all that portion of New-York beyond the British palisades which traversed Broadway at Chambers-street.

Those who are familiar with the location of this our noble street of Broadway, the pride of the metropolis, can imagine the thrilling effect of the moment on the spectators. They saw the flag of an independent empire waving on the Battery; beyond, the bay, glittering in the meridian sun; and, floating on the bay, the ships that were to convey their late

masters for ever from the land that had rejected them. At the upper extremity of the street appeared General Washington, the spotless patriot, the faultless military chieftain, the father of his country; "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen:" he on whom every epithet of praise has been exhausted, and whose virtues praise never yet reached. With him were his companions in arms and glory, and following him his soldiers, their garments worn and soiled, and their arms broken and defaced. It mattered not. The period of toils and hardship, of hope and fear, of seed-time, was past—the harvest was to come, the abundant harvest to them, their children's children, and the *stranger within their gates.*

The procession drew near to Wall-street, where it was to turn; a few paces lower down was the locust-tree where our friends were grouped. As the cavalcade approached, Mr. Linwood began to show signs of fidgeting. Isabella's arm was in his: "Let us go in, sir," she said.

"Presently, my dear, presently; I'll have one look at Washington. By George of Oxford! a noble figure of a man! Ah, but for him, the rebels would never have carried the day."

"For him, and the Lord on their side!" involuntarily added Rose, who had advanced to give her little charge a chance at a glance at his father.

"The Lord on the side of such a ragged regiment of ragamuffins? High sons of liberty, for-

sooth!" replied Mr. Linwood, chuckling at the wretched appearance of the American soldiers.

"They are extremely ragged," said Mrs. Linwood; "such a contrast to our army."

"They are, God bless them!" said Isabella, "and sacred, in my eyes, as the garments of the saints, are these outward signs of their brave toils."

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. Herbert Linwood, "I see my husband!—and there, Belle, is Colonel Lee, on the very horse General Putnam gave him. I wish his poor man Kisel, of whom I have so often heard him speak, had lived to amble after him this day. 'Poor fool!' Eliot will always have 'one part in his heart that's sorry yet for thee.'"

Isabella's eye had followed the direction of her sister's; her cheek became suddenly pale, and she reiterated her wish to her father to return into the house.

"In a minute, my dear child, in a minute; let's first see them wheel into Wall-street. Who is that Colonel Lee you spoke of, Anne?"

"Eliot Lee, sir. Did not Belle tell you how he was sent with the detachment from the northern army to the south, and how he behaved with such gallantry at the taking of Cornwallis, that he received a colonelcy immediately after from Congress—did you not tell, Belle?" she added, archly smiling at her sister.

The turn into Wall-street was now to be made, and the officers riding ahead came nearly parallel

to our friends. General Washington seeing, and instantly recognising, Isabella Linwood and her sister, saluted them. Mr. Linwood instinctively doffed his hat, and bowed low to the commander of the rebel army. Eliot Lee's eye met Isabella's, and returned its brightest beam to the welcome that flashed from hers. Herbert kissed his hand to his friends, and stretched his arms to his boy. Rose lifted the little fellow high in the air; he was inspired with the animation of the scene, and the word that was then shouted forth from a thousand tongues, the first he ever uttered, burst from his lips—"*Huzza!*"

The following, and many successive evenings, Eliot Lee passed with the Linwoods. Those of our kind readers whose patience has brought them to the close of these volumes, will not be surprised that our heroine, after her conquest over a misplaced, and, as it may strictly be termed, an accidental passion, should return with her whole heart his love who deserved, if man could deserve it, that treasure.

Did the course of their true love run smooth? Yes, true love though it was, it did. The bare fact that his daughter Isabella, who seemed to him fit to grace a peerage, was to wed the portionless son of a New-England farmer, was at first startling to Mr. Linwood. But, as few men are, he was true to his theories; and when Isabella,

quoting his own words on a former occasion, frankly confessed that she had given her heart to Eliot Lee, and "that meant her respect, honour, esteem, and all that one of God's creatures can feel for another," he replied, fondly kissing her, "Then God's will be done, my child, and give your hand too!"

We are aware that the champions of romance, the sage expounders of the laws of sentiment, maintain that there can be but one love. We will not dispute with them, though we honestly believe, that in the capacities of loving, as in all other capacities, there be diversities of gifts; but we will concede that such a sentiment as united Isabella and Eliot Lee can never be extinguished; and therefore can never be repealed. It blended their purposes, pursuits, hopes, joys, and sorrows; it became a part of their spiritual natures, and independent of the accidents of life.

As the cause of humanity and the advance of civilization depend mainly on the purity of the institution of marriage, I shall not have written in vain if I have led one mind more highly to appreciate its responsibilities and estimate its results; its effect not only on the happiness of life, but on that portion of our nature which is destined to immortality: if I persuade even one of my young countrywomen so to reverence herself, and so to estimate the social duties and ties, that she will not give her hand without her heart, nor her heart till she is

quite sure of his good desert who seeks it. And, above all, I shall not have written in vain if I save a single young creature from the barter of youth and beauty for money, the merely legal union of persons and fortunes multiplying among us, partly from wrong education and false views of the objects of life, but chiefly from the growing imitation of the artificial and vicious society of Europe.

It is only by entering into these holy and most precious bonds with right motives and right feelings, that licentious doctrines can be effectually overthrown, and the arguments of the more respectable advocates of the new and unscriptural doctrine of divorce can be successfully opposed.

We boldly then advise our young friends so far to cultivate the romance of their natures (if it be romance to value the soul and its high offices above all earthly consideration), as to eschew rich old *roué* bachelors, *looking-out* widowers with large fortunes, and idle, ignorant young heirs; and to imitate our heroine in trusting to the honourable resources of virtue and talent, and a joint stock of industry and frugality, in a country that is sure to smile upon these qualities, and reward them with as much worldly prosperity as is necessary to happiness, and safe for virtue.

NOTE TO VOLUME SECOND.

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a One of the thousand pleasing anecdotes related of La Fayette at his last visit to America, was, that a rich iron-merchant in one of our large cities was presented to him, and after the customary courtesies, took out his watch and showed it to La Fayette, asking him if he remembered it. La Fayette seemed to have an indistinct reminiscence of some circumstance connected with the watch. "You do not remember, sir," said the merchant, "that at a certain time and place" (specifying both), "you stopped at a blacksmith's shop to have your horse shod. The smith and his family were ill, and in a most wretched condition He was obliged to be upheld while he shod the horse. You told him you had no money to spare, and gave him this watch. He pledged it—afterward redeemed it, and here it is, still in his possession!"

As the circumstance related of La Fayette in our text has no connexion with historical events, we trust our friends of the legal profession will not prove an *alibi* against us.

THE END.

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